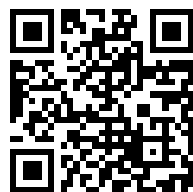
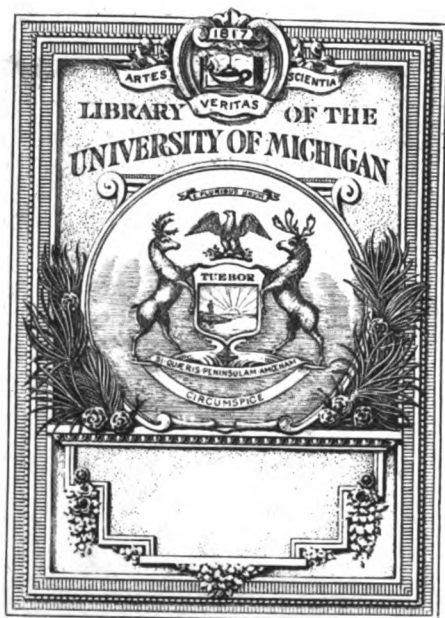

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KING ALFRED'S BOOKS

Alfred the Great, King of England, 849-901.

KING ALFRED'S BOOKS

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND
BISHOP G. F. BROWNE

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FORMERLY BISHOP OF STEPNEY, AND OF BRISTOL

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO
SIR ISRAEL GOLLANCZ
WITHOUT WHOSE INITIAL GUIDANCE AND HELP IT
COULD NOT HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN
AND TO
THE VISCOUNTESS COWDRAY
AND
THE HONOURABLE ESMÉ SMYTH
UNDER WHOSE HOSPITABLE CHARGE AT COWDRAY
PARK AND DUNECHT AND NESS CASTLE LARGE
PARTS OF THE BOOK WERE WRITTEN

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INTRODUCTION

KING ALFRED'S Books, dealt with in this volume, are six. To name them in the order in which they come, they are : (1) *The Blooms from the Soliloquies of St. Augustine*; (2) *The Dialogues of Saint Gregory the Great*; (3) *The History and Geography of Orosius*; (4) *The Pastoral Care of Saint Gregory the Great*; (5) *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English Race*; (6) *The Consolation of Philosophy, by Boethius*.

It is a very serious undertaking to produce a book which shall set forth to the English of the twentieth century the books which King Alfred translated or set others to translate from the Latin for his English subjects in the ninth century. Those books are in the early English of the ninth century, and so are not intelligible for the English of to-day. It is worth while to attempt to put their matter and their manner before the present generation of English-speaking folk, to whom the history and the personality of King Alfred, so far as they know it, has a romantic appeal.

There have been two anniversaries in the memory of the older men now living, which have called special attention to the life and work of the King. The first was the thousandth anniversary of his birth, which came in 1849, the other the thousandth anniversary of his death, in 1901. On each of these occasions, a main part of the celebration centred round his literary work. In each case it was agreed that some publication should be undertaken, to inform and interest the English-speaking people of the time in the great things he did for the people of his far-off time.

On the earlier occasion the publication took the form of a Jubilee Edition of the books attributed to the King, which appeared about three years after the actual date of the anniversary. Its title is *The Jubilee Edition of the Complete Works of King Alfred the Great*, J. F. Smith and Co., Oxford and Cambridge, 1852.

C.F.
Hamm

The Preface to the first volume states that "a public meeting was held in the town of Wantage, on the 25th of October, 1849, to celebrate the Jubilee or thousandth year since the birth of King Alfred the Great.

"At that festival, twenty thousand of our fellow-countrymen were met together, and the whole town presented an appearance of mirth and holiday. A select number of one hundred persons dined together at the Alfred's Head, and their chairman was Charles Eyston, Esq., of Hendred House, near Wantage, a true English gentleman, and both in heart and name a thorough Anglo-Saxon. At that meeting, attended by guests from every part of England, and from America, that hopeful mother of future Anglo-Saxons, as well as from Germany, that ancient cradle of our common race, it was resolved:

"That a Jubilee Edition of the works of King Alfred the Great, with copious literary historical and pictorial illustrations, should be immediately undertaken, to be edited by the most competent Anglo-Saxon scholars who might be willing to combine for such a purpose."

The first volume was chiefly prefatory. It contained various essays. It dealt at considerable length with the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, and gave a translation into modern English verse, by Mr. M. F. Tupper, of the Anglo-Saxon Lays of Boethius. The Lays were treated as certainly the work of Alfred himself.

The second and third volumes (in one) contained Alfred's Orosius in modern English, with an Essay on Alfred's Geography; Alfred's Bede in modern English; an Essay on the Handbook; Alfred's Boethius in modern English; the Preface to the Dialogues of Gregory; and the Preface to the Pastoral Care, with the first part of the Pastoral Care itself. The editor, Dr. J. A. Giles, made the following remarks on the Pastoral Care:

"The work, of course, partakes of the theological character of the original, and will not bear translating into English; whilst at the same time if translated it would be of no use or interest to any class of readers. . . . Except the Preface, no part of the Pastoral has ever before been printed,¹ and for the reasons above stated we prefer to give only the first part of the book."

At the end of Chapter X of the Pastoral Care, the editor

¹ That is to say in modern English.

of the Jubilee Edition prints the following note : “ These ten chapters of Gregory’s Pastoral Care are sufficient to show the character of the work. Even if it were desirable to translate the whole, a great impediment to our doing so would be the nature of some parts of it, far too indelicate for modern general perusal, though quite of a piece with other treatises on points which in former times it was not thought unbecoming of the Church to handle.”

The volume closed with the Blossom-gatherings of King Alfred from the Soliloquies of St. Augustine, and King Alfred’s Laws.

When the time came to note the thousandth anniversary of the death of King Alfred, eight essays dealing with his many claims to greatness were put together and edited by Mr. Alfred Bowker, the Mayor of Winchester. The volume was published in 1899, with the title *Alfred the Great*, London, Adam and Charles Black, 1899.

The Introductory Essay was written by Sir Walter Besant. The Poet Laureate, Alfred Austin, wrote the following stanzas :

Some lights there be within the Heavenly Spheres
Yet unrevealed, the interspace so vast :
So through the distance of a thousand years
Alfred’s full radiance shines on us at last.

Star of the spotless fame, from far-off skies
Teaching this truth, too long not understood,
That only they are worthy who are wise,
And none are truly great that are not good.

Of valour, virtues, letters, learning, law,
Pattern and Prince, His name will now abide,
Long as of conscience rulers live in awe,
And love of country is their only pride.

But with his name four other names attune,
Which from oblivion guardian Song may save ;
Lone Athelney, victorious Ethandune,
Wantage his cradle, Winchester his grave.

The other essays were :
Alfred as King, by Frederick Harrison.

Alfred as Religious Man and Educationalist, by Bishop G. F. Browne.

Alfred as Warrior, by Charles Oman.

Alfred as Geographer, by Sir Clements Markham.

Alfred as Writer, by Professor Earle.

English Law before the Norman Conquest, by Sir Frederick Pollock, Bart.

Alfred and the Arts, by the Reverend W. J. Loftie.

The Early English Text Society has rendered invaluable service towards the appreciation of the literary debt England owed and owes to King Alfred, by publishing the Anglo-Saxon texts of several of the translations from the Latin which Alfred made or employed others to make. Our grateful acknowledgment of the permission we have received from the authorities of this Society to make free use of their publications is due to Sir Israel Gollancz, the editor-in-chief.

While it is of special interest to associate the personality of our hero King with these books, from a more general point of view that association is of less importance than the fact of the books themselves. The more one studies these Anglo-Saxon books, with their glosses and additions, the more one wonders that in the ninth century of the Christian era our Anglian and Saxon ancestors were ripe for the study and the enjoyment of such literature. No doubt the books were intended to raise the tastes of the people to higher thoughts and higher things. No doubt written and spoken matter of a much lower character was prevalent, it may be of a character so low that a sharp antidote was greatly needed. Still the fact remains that by whomsoever produced the books were issued, and that they lived, and that they have come down to us. We do not know that the same can be said of the vernacular literature of any other nation of Europe in the century that gave them birth and treasured them so safely. We may well be rightly proud of the leaders of thought of those days, and wonder whether the leaders of thought of to-day are a clear thousand years of Christian progress ahead of them.

It is an interesting fact that all of the authors selected by King Alfred for presentment to his English people are brought before us by Dante in the *Paradiso*, all but one of them in one passage ; Orosius, Augustine, Gregory, Boethius,

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Bede. We may take Mr. H. F. Cary's rendering and notes, from the edition of *Dante* by George Bell and Sons, 1892.

Dante, *Paradiso*, x. 118

Next behold

That taper's radiance,¹ to whose view was shown,
Clearliest, the nature and the ministry
Angelical, while yet in flesh it dwelt.
In the other little light serenely smiles
That pleader² for the Christian temples, he,
Who did provide Augustin of his lore.
Now if thy mind's eye pass from light to light,
Upon my praises following, of the eighth³
Thy thirst is next. The saintly soul that shows
The world's deceitfulness, to all who hear him,
Is with the sight of all the good that is
Blest there. The limbs whence it was driven lie
Down in Cieldauro, and from martyrdom
And exile came it here. Lo ! further on,
Where flames the arduous spirit of Isidore⁴ ;
Of Bede, and Richard,⁵ more than man, meanwhile,
In deep discernment.

The remaining author, Gregory the Great, is specially connected by Dante with St. Dionysius, referred to in the passage we have quoted.

Dante, *Paradiso*, xxviii. 126

But soon as in this heaven his doubting eyes
Were opened, Gregory at his error smiled.

This last is in connexion with the claim of Dionysius to have learned from St. Paul the orders of the angels, arch-angels, dominions, powers, etc., which he included in his book. Gregory had corrected his orders of the powers.

¹ Dionysius, St., the Areopagite (pseudo) ; a Greek fanatic who gave himself out for St. Paul's disciple.

² Paulus Orosius. Dante, in his treatise *De Vulg. Eloq.*, ii. 6, says he was one of his most favourite authors *qui uti sunt altissimas prosas*, Cicero, Livy, Pliny, and Frontinus.

³ Boetius. Buried at Pavia, in the monastery of S. Pietro in Ciel d'oro.

⁴ Archbishop of Seville, d. 635.

⁵ Richard of St. Victor, a native of Scotland or Ireland. Canon and Prior of the monastery of St. Victor in Paris, the chief of the Mystics ; author of the famous book *The Mystical Ark*.

Homil., xxxiv. 125, ed. Par. 1518, Novem . . . Angelos, archangelos, virtutes, potestates, principatus, dominationes, thronos, cherubin atque seraphin.

That is, of course, not the only mention of Gregory the Great by Dante. Curiously enough he appears in the *Purgatorio* as well as in the *Paradiso*, under the interesting legend that his prayers released the Emperor Trajan from Purgatory.

Dante, *Purgatorio*, x. 68

There was storied on the rock
The exalted glory of the Roman prince,
Whose mighty worth moved Gregory to earn
His mighty conquest, Trajan the Emperor.

Dante, *Paradiso*, xx. 103

Of lively hope
Such was the meed ; of lively hope, that winged
The prayers sent up to God for his release,
And put power into them to bend His will.

Alfred's master of study, Bishop Asser, in his *Annals of the Reign of Alfred the Great*, gives a detailed account of the earliest beginnings of the great literary benefits which Alfred conferred on his own generation and all future generations of the English-speaking race. His account runs thus :

"In the year of Our Lord's Incarnation 887, Alfred by divine inspiration began on one and the same day to read and to interpret. But that I may explain this the more fully to those who are ignorant, I will relate the cause of the long delay in beginning.

"On a certain day we were both of us sitting in the King's chamber, talking on all kinds of subjects as usual, and it happened that I read to him a quotation out of a certain book. He heard it attentively with both his ears, and addressed me with a thoughtful mind, showing me at the same moment a book which he carried in his bosom, wherein the daily courses and psalms and prayers which he had read in his youth were written, and he bade me write the same quotation in that book. Hearing this, and perceiving his ingenuous benevolence and devout desire of studying the words of divine wisdom, I gave in secret boundless thanks to Almighty God, Who had implanted such a love of wisdom

in the King's heart. But I could not find any empty space in that book wherein to write the quotation, for it was already full of various matters; wherefore I made a little delay, principally that I might stir up the bright intelligence of the King to a higher acquaintance with the divine testimonies. Upon his urging me to make haste and write it quickly, I said to him, 'Are you willing that I should write that quotation on some leaf apart? It is not certain whether we shall find one or more other such extracts which will please you. If that should so happen we shall be glad that we have kept this quotation apart.' 'Your plan is good,' said he. I gladly made haste to get ready a sheet, at the beginning of which I wrote what he bade me; and on that same day I wrote therein, as I had expected, no less than three other quotations which pleased him. From that time we daily talked together and found other quotations which pleased him, so that the sheet became full, and deservedly so, according as it is written, 'The just man builds upon a moderate foundation, and by degrees passes to greater things.'

"Thus, like a most productive bee, he flew here and there, asking questions as he went, until he had eagerly and unceasingly collected many various flowers of divine scriptures, with which he thickly stored the cells of his mind.

"Now when that first quotation was copied, he was eager at once to read, and to interpret in Saxon, and then to teach others. . . .

"The King, inspired by God, began to study the rudiments of divine Scripture on the sacred solemnity of St. Martin, November 11; and he continued to learn the flowers collected by certain masters and to reduce them into the form of one book, as he was then able, mixed one with another until it became almost as large as a psalter. This book he called his *Enchiridion* or *Manual*, because he carefully kept it at hand night and day, and found, as he told me, no small consolation therein."

It is conceivable that in some unexpected place the manuscript of the Handbook may yet be found. William of Malmesbury had a copy of it, and he writes as if at his date, about 1125, his readers were likely to have copies to refer to. In his *Life of Aldhelm of Malmesbury and Sherborne, Anglia Sacra*, ii. 3, he says, "Any one who reads the Handbook, *Manualis liber*, of King Elfred will find that Kenter,

the father of the blessed Aldhelm, was not the brother of King Ina, but a very near blood relation." Later on in the same *Life*, ii. 4, he again quotes this book of Elfred's, as telling that no one was equal to Aldhelm in writing English verse and singing it to tunes. Elfred adds, William says, that Aldhelm composed a street song which was still sung in Alfred's time. Further, the Handbook told that Aldhelm used to disguise himself and sit on the bridge at Malmesbury as the country people left the place after service, and sung common songs of his own, introducing Scripture lessons and thus giving them a sermon under guise of a song which induced them to stop and listen. Again, William gives, in his *Deeds of the King's*, ii. 4, a list of the books which Alfred gave to his people in the vernacular, in the following order, "*Orosius*, Gregory's *Pastoral*, Bede's *History of the Angles*, Boethius' *Of the Consolation of Philosophy*, and his own book, which he called in his vernacular tongue Handboc, that is, Manual." He died, William adds, just as he had begun a translation of the Psalms. In this connexion it is interesting, and it may be important, to note that an Anglo-Saxon manuscript at Paris contains fifty of the Psalms, and that the style of the version is said to resemble Alfred's style. Apart from all considerations of detail, it is evident that the Book of Psalms, so aptly described by the late Father R. M. Benson of Cowley as "The War-Songs of the Prince of Peace," must have had very great attractions for our English warrior songster.

Asser tells us a very interesting little story about Alfred's first entry as a boy upon literary cares. His parents had sent their older sons to the great men of the kingdom for their education, but they kept Alfred, the youngest, at home with them and entirely neglected his book-learning. In all other respects, especially in the art of hunting, on which they depended so much in those times for their supply of food, he was admirably trained. He was noted for the attention with which he listened to the Saxon poems of the earlier times, and the care with which he stored them in his retentive memory. One day his mother showed the boys an illuminated manuscript of Anglo-Saxon poems, and promised the book to the one who first could read it. Alfred was delighted with the beauty of an initial letter. He took the book to his master and read it. When it was read, he brought it back and recited it, and so became possessed of

it. It is permissible to suggest that with his excellent memory and his love for Saxon poems he merely learned it by heart from his master's reading. The phrases seem to point that way.

The mother here spoken of was probably his stepmother, Judith, whose father Charles le Chauve delighted in the beauty of the pages and covers of his books, among the most beautiful now in existence; his Psalter, and his Gospel Book, and his St. Denis Bible, and his Metz Bible. The artistic taste of Judith's family can be traced through Charlemagne, Louis le Débonnaire, and Lothaire. To this source we may trace the art of Wessex, which in earlier times had been so inferior to the art of the Northumbrian Angles.

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Life

When Alfred had ascended the throne, the training of his family was a pattern to all. His youngest son, Ethelweard, was sent to the schools which Alfred himself had established. He invited four learned men from Mercia¹ and two from Gaul,² as teachers. Ethelweard had as his school-fellows the children of almost all the Wessex nobles, and many that were not noble. They learned to read both Latin and Saxon books, and they learned to write. By the time they were ready to practise the manly arts, hunting, and such pursuits as befitted noblemen, they had become studious and clever in the liberal arts. His older children had been taught at home, and no less carefully. They learned the Psalms, and read Saxon books, especially Saxon poems.

Our work is confined to the translations from the Latin of six important books. There are other writings of the same or nearly the same date. We have four manuscripts of a Book of Martyrs in Anglo-Saxon; one of them—of two leaves only—appears to be of Alfred's time. Of the saints recorded in this Book of Martyrs, none is later than the ninth century. One of the Lives, that of St. Milus, must, Mr. Cockayne said, have been brought direct from Syria to England, probably through Helias the patriarch of Jerusalem, with whom Alfred had correspondence, as appears from Mr. Cockayne's *Leech Book*. The students who have investigated the matter agree that the Book of Martyrs was at least in use in Alfred's time and was probably then composed. But there is nothing to connect its compilation or translation

¹ Wenefrith, Plegmund, Ethelstan, and Werewulf. Asser, after some bargaining, came from South Wales.

² Grimbold, provost of St. Omer, and John of Corbey.

with the King, though it has been named King Alfred's Book of Martyrs.

Florence of Worcester quotes (*Mon. Hist. Brit.*, p. 641) the *Dicta Regis Alfredi*; "after this reigned Kenter for two years, as is found in sayings of King Alfred; but according to the English *Chronicle* his son Æscwine reigned for nearly three years." We have a poetical work of maxims and proverbs in which each detached sentence begins with "Thus said Alfred." It opens with an assembly of nobles at Seaford, presided over by King Alfred, "the Shepherd and Darling of England." It appears to be a composition of the twelfth century.

It will be evident to any one who is good enough to glance at this volume, that it has been a matter of some difficulty to decide how to put the substance of King Alfred's Books before the reader; whether to proceed by description or by quotation. To take a particular case, a summary of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* would not at all have served our purpose and would have been dry reading. The best course appeared to be to find excuse in Alfred's omissions or alterations for giving the whole of one and another of Bede's stories. In this way some very graphic passages are presented whole to the reader who is not acquainted with Bede's *History*, while at the same time the details of the differences between the two editions—so to call them—produced in Bede's lifetime, presumably by himself or with his knowledge, are clearly brought out.

This method of full direct quotation has the advantage of suggesting to the reader who has leisure time, the advisability of procuring and reading such books as Mr. Hargrove's *Blooms*, Mr. Bramley's *Pastoral Care*, and any or all of the translations of the Latin or the Anglo-Saxon *Boethius*, by Mr. H. R. James, Messrs. Stewart and Rand, Mr. Fox, and Dr. Sedgefield.

One question of some importance has naturally had to be considered. It may be stated simply thus: In rendering ancient English into modern English, is it well to give an archaic tone to the modern English?

A dictum of the late Mr. Sweet is given at p. 142 in connexion with his rendering of Gregory's *Pastoral Care*. Mr. Sweet says: "I have endeavoured to translate into the received language of the present day, and have carefully avoided that heterogeneous mixture of Chaucer, Dickens,

and Broad Scotch, which is affected by so many translators from the Northern languages."

It may be argued, effectively we think, that our aim should be to give so much or so little of an archaic tone to a version in modern English as may keep before us the sense that we are getting into the mind of a writer and speaker a thousand years ago, and are making the thousand years ago speak to us and become as it were personal and real. We lose that sense when the version is carefully constructed in such tone that we may read page after page of it without the idea of the antiquity of the original ever entering our minds. Modern English is in large measure composed of Latin and Greek, and it is well now and then to get back to a time when that admixture had not begun, or had not become marked.

With this in view we have given examples of both styles in the course of our work. The largest part of the *Blooms* is given in the style of the Jubilee Edition, "I wit," "I ween," the concluding pages are in Mr. Hargrove's polished English. Again, at the end of the *Boethius* Mr. Fox provides us with a version in the less modern style. The regular Anglo-Saxon method of recording the utterances of a dialogue, "quoth he," "quoth I," is not unworthy of employment in our time.

How much can be done with English without the use of long words and foreign words may be shown by reprinting a little *Life of King Alfred*, apposite to our work, written about the time of the thousandth anniversary of the King's death. All the words are monosyllables, or are pronounced as monosyllables, as "weighed," "watched." This must not be taken as implying that Anglo-Saxon is a language of short words. As a rule, the Anglo-Saxon version of Bede has longer words than the modern English version.

A comparison of a few lines in the story of Caedmon of Whitby, in the Anglo-Saxon and in the modern English translation, gives a fair idea of the facts. The Anglo-Saxon has 53 monosyllables and 40 longer words, 93 in all. The modern English has 62 monosyllables and 15 longer words, 77 in all.

A similar comparison of modern English with Latin and Greek gives curious results. The passage chosen is Genesis iii. 1-10. There are 236 monosyllables and 40 longer words in the English, 276 in all; 60 monosyllables and 121 longer

words in the Latin, 181 in all; 94 monosyllables and 128 longer words in Greek, 222 in all. Of the 40 longer words in the English, only one has as many as three syllables, "every," unless we count "opened." Many of the Latin and Greek words have four and five syllables; one of the Greek words has six.

Thus in all these respects the English of the "Authorized" Version has great advantages over the two ancient languages. The English of to-day has borrowed more words and long words from other languages, but notwithstanding its overabundant foreign element it retains its old advantage.

Here is the article on King Alfred in monosyllables :

King Alfred the Great, died A.D. 901

BY THE RIGHT REV. G. F. BROWNE, D.D., D.C.L., LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL

My aim is not to give a sketch of this great King's life, but to note some of the things which we can learn from it.

We do not know of one wrong thing done by him. We are told much of his life by one who knew him well, and there is no spot on his fair fame. Brave, wise, good, and pure; that, so far as we know, he was. For what he was, as well as for what he did, we thank God.

It is a long time since he died, and yet we can learn to love him as though we had seen him and known him. It does us good to let our heart go out to love the men who did the work God gave them to do, far back in the years that are gone.

He could not bear to waste time. The day was too short for all that he felt bound to do for man and for God, for his land and for his soul. He must mark the flight of time, so that none might be lost. He had not a clock or a watch which he could take with him in his tent, or keep in the rude huts they made for him in the woods as he went from place to place. Men had to trust to the sun to tell them the time of day; and when the sun was hid, they had to guess. So he weighed out wax, and put a wick in it, and marked by the sun how long that weight of wax would burn. Then he cut white ox horn quite thin, so that you could see through it, and he put this round the flame that the draughts might not make the wax burn too fast. Thus he knew how the time went, by day or by night, and he spent it all well.

When he made up his mind that a thing must be done, he set to work at it with all his might. If it was a great and hard thing, too great and hard for him to do it soon or do it all, he did as much of it as he could, and did it in the best way. He did not think scorn of the day of small things. He did the small things well, so that when the day of great things came, all the small things he had done should count to the good. In this way he did in the course of time much for which there seemed at first to be no hope. Who could have thought that when, near the close of a sad year, he fled from the Danes with his wife and a few friends, and lived for months on a small low mound in the midst of a great marsh, the end would be that in the spring he would come out and beat the foe? But so it was. His plans had been well laid; each step he took was straight and right and wise; and so in the end he won.

He was a great man of war when he had to fight for the sake of home and of peace. The Danes were too strong for us in all parts of the land; but when they came to face the King, they found him at the last too strong for them. Nine great fights he fought with them in one year. His men might well trust him, and go where he led, and win his fights for him, for he knew how to lead them, and they knew that when the time came he could fight too. We have seen in our own time how men will march and will fight when they are led by one of whom they know that he is in the best sense a man.

He took care to see with his own eyes that things were done, and were done well. He trained with great skill his own hounds, to whose help men had in those days to trust for a large part of their meat. His arms for war, his harps for song, his books to tell him how to pray and teach him what he did not know, all were done with his eye on the men who made them or wrote them. It is good for us to know that an Eye is on us in our work and in our play.

I do not think the tale of the burnt cakes is true as it is told. If this King was set to watch cakes, I am sure he watched cakes well, so far as he knew how to do it. It may have been that they were hid from sight, and he had to look from time to time to see how they got on. Cooks know when to look, and still they do burn our bread at times. I feel sure the King did not know what cooks know if he let the cakes burn.

hush!

He ruled his own house well. Each child was taught with care the will of God, and was taught with care as great such things as would help it to be of use in the world. On no point was the King more clear than on this, that the child is the man of a few years hence, the soul that shall be when years have ceased to run ; and that the child must be so taught from its first years as to be fit for the part it has to play in this world and in the next.

He gave laws to the men whom he ruled. They were not his own laws. He chose out, from laws which men of his race had made, such as he thought best for the time in which he was king. At the head of them he set the laws of God, as God gave them once for all ; and he showed how the laws he chose for his own men came from the laws of God. In this and in all things he looked to God as the head and heart and soul of all that he did.

He wrote books for the men of his time to read in their own tongue in which they were born. The books were meant to teach them how they should live and please God, and fear Him and love Him with all their heart ; how they might learn to know and to see God ; how they should know and care for their own soul. They were to read of the ills that had come in the past to those who did wrong things, and see how great is the help that God can give to those who seek to do right things. They were to read of God's Church in their own land, from the first days of its life, and to learn from what they read how they should love and should work for their Church, and do its will, and keep its laws. They were to read the Word of God as the best of all books. They were to read the books of good men, too, and cull from them the blooms of their lore, and store them up, and live the rest of their days on earth in peace of mind, in the strength which they gave to their soul. They were to feel and know that the end of their days on earth was not the end of their life, that their life would aye last in its true home, in the House of God in the skies.

How strong, you will say, he must have been ! what good health he must have had, to do so much as he did ! It was not so. He had bad health. He was one of four sons ; three died as young men—a weak race. He did his work in spite of great pain, which came on him in sharp spasms and would not leave him free. He had much to bear. How that thought should nerve some of us, and bid

us not faint, and teach us not to say we are too weak to do the work of God !

He served God. That was his true strength ; there is no strength like that. If he could not sleep at night, he called to his bed side one who could read to him the Word of God ; or he got up and went to the church to pray to God there. In the day time he kept in the breast of his dress a small book, in which he had put down from time to time the texts and the thoughts which had helped him most ; and when he was sore tried, and felt deep need of help and strength, he took out his book and read the parts that best met his needs. We can all of us do that with the Word of God, and then we shall be strong.

This was a great and wise king, a good and true man, from whom old and young, rich and poor, great and small, have much to learn.

While there is not, so far as the present writer knows, any book dealing on an extended scale with all of these six of Alfred's Books, there is a valuable chapter on " Alfred and the Old English Prose of his Reign " in the Cambridge *History of English Literature*, vol. i, chap. vi, by P. G. Thomas, M.A., Professor of English Language and Literature at Bedford College in the University of London.

Mr. Thomas remarks that the Old English preface to the *Pastoral Care* shows that this was the earliest book of the series ; and adds that this makes it the first important piece of prose in English, and it is thus linguistically of unique value.

The *Bede*, he thinks, was naturally more likely to come next than the *Orosius*, because it was in Alfred's day the standard history of the early English Church and the whole of it was fitted to the English, whereas of the *History of Orosius* a large part had no point for them, so that much editing was required. Further, Bede's Latin is much easier than the Latin of Orosius, who packs a great deal into a phrase.

Dr. Richard Garnett, in his *History of English Literature*,¹ vol. i, pp. 46, 47, expresses the opinion that three of the books, the *Orosius*, the *Pastoral Care*, and the *Boethius*, were undoubtedly translated by Alfred himself ; and that the

¹ London : William Heinemann, 1903.

Plummer

versions of the *Dialogues* and the *Bede* were probably made by others under his superintendence. The *Bede*, Dr. Garnett says, does not in itself claim to be by Alfred,¹ but it is attributed to him by Aelfric, and the traces of the Mercian dialect which it is thought to exhibit are not absolutely incompatible with that attribution, as they may have been introduced by a copyist. Any version, however, he remarks, executed under Alfred's direction was very likely to be attributed to him. On the much-debated question of the "Blooms," or "Blossom-gatherings," from Augustine's *Soliloquies* and his *Epistle to Paulina on the Vision of God*, with interpolations from other sources, he mentions that the only manuscript of the treatise distinctly attributes it to Alfred; but adds that the diction is of much later date, possibly due to the transcriber, while allowing that the connexion between the "Blooms" and Alfred's version of *Boethius* "is certainly remarkable," as indeed it is.

Dr. Garnett's appreciation of the several books is discriminating, with a bias. The *History of Orosius* is as satisfactory an approach to a philosophy of history as the limited outlook and the theological prejudice of the time of its composition allowed. The *Pastoral Care* was as good a manual for a clergy depressed into ignorance and barbarism by the misfortunes of the time as could well be compiled for an age in which the sacerdotal conception of the pastoral office was as yet the only one possible. The *Dialogues* afforded a collection of moral and religious tales, intended to be edifying, and all the more effective in the Middle Ages from its infusion of the grotesque. *Bede's History* is so English in subject and sentiment that in rendering it, or causing it to be rendered, Alfred but restored it to the language to which it should always have belonged. Of the *Boethius* Dr. Garnett writes enthusiastically:

"There can be no surer touchstone of a refined and sensitive mind than its appreciation of this book. Alfred's admiration for it, the predilection with which he evidently regarded it, and his numerous variations and embellishments, sever him at once from the multitude of contemporary kings, and place him on a level with the other two monarchs who have most intimately united the philosophic character with efficiency in rule and administration, Marcus Aurelius and Akhbar. Any of the three, it is probable, if transferred to

¹ See page 181.

the place of the others, would have signalized himself in nearly the same manner. It should not be forgotten that of all the numerous mediæval translations of the *Consolation*, one of which is by Chaucer, Alfred's is the greatest."

Professor Alois Brandl of Berlin has written very thoughtfully and appreciatively of the Alfred Books in his *Geschichte von Altenglischen Literatur*, Strassburg, 1908. It is one of the sadnesses of the Great War that it placed a great barrier between like-thinking friends. The inscription in a presentation copy of his book is an abiding reminder of this sadness: "To his Grace the Bishop of Bristol, most respectfully, A. Brandl. 1911." A squeeze showing the runes for "Kadmon" on the head of the Ruthwell Cross failed to reach Professor Brandl, and nothing more has been heard. If by any strange chance this volume should come into his hands, the writer would indeed be thankful to be assured that bitterness of feeling is being replaced by the kindly sympathy of union of interest in the delightful remains of the literature of ancestors direct and collateral a thousand years ago. It is a good omen that just as this is written (February 24, 1920) the world of letters reads of an address on "Internationalism in Literature" by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield.

One more subject needs mention in this Introduction, the absence of an Index. It has seemed sufficient to print at the beginning a fairly full Table of Contents. A minute Index would have run to an inordinate length, and a large part of it would never have been used.

We cannot close without an *apologia* for the various treatments of the diphthongs *æ* and *œ*. While many cases may be due to forgetfulness or carelessness, the majority of cases are due to the fact that the usage of an author quoted has not been intentionally altered.

G. F. BROWNE

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April 1920

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Frontispiece

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THE BLOOMS OF ST. AUGUSTINE

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“THE Flowers, Blooms [*Blostman*], selected out of the book of Soliloquies of St. Augustine, bishop of Hippo, by the most august King Alfred of the Anglo-Saxons, and rendered into Saxon by him; copied by Junius from the Codex Vitellius A 15, in the Cotton Library.”

Such is the description by Wanley (Catal., p. 96) of a manuscript in the Bodleian Library, Jun. 70, I. At p. 218 of his Catalogue he describes the original Cotton Manuscript in the same terms, and adds, “This manuscript was formerly in the possession of the Church of St. Mary of Suwika, as appears from fo. 2. It was written after the Conquest in Normanno-Saxon letters.” Hulme, who published the complete text in the thirteenth volume of Kölbing's *Englische Studien*, 1893, pp. 331–56, remarks that it is undoubtedly a late manuscript, agreeing with Wülker in assigning it to the twelfth century. It has been put as early as 950, but that early date must be abandoned; the early part of the twelfth century is the probable date. The dialect is said to be late West Saxon, impure in many respects. No other manuscript of the *Blooms* is known to be in existence.

That this Anglo-Saxon manuscript came from the Church of St. Mary in Suwika has a special interest for us, inasmuch as Leland, visiting the library there, noted¹ that he saw manuscripts of the works of Henry of Huntingdon, Bede *On*

¹ *Collectanea*, iii. 149; in Hearne's edition, iv. 149.

the Day of Judgment, and Bede's *History* in the Saxon version. Suwika is Southwyche in Hampshire. The Priory was founded by Henry I for Austin Canons, in the castle of Porchester. It was afterwards moved to Southwyche, a neighbouring place. We have an Inspeximus of Henry III, in which that king calls it Suwyka; his recitation of the foundation by Henry I in 1133 sets forth the donation by that king to the Priory in Porchester of one hide in Suwyk. The evidence that our manuscript formed part of the library of Suwyk is found, as Wanley says, on folio 2. It is written in a small and beautifully firm and clear hand on the vacant space at the foot of the page, "Hic liber est ecclesiæ beatæ Mariæ de Suwika. Quem qui ab ea abstulerit," etc.

Thomas Rudborne also, the second of that name, who wrote the *Historia Major* of Winchester about 1440, saw this Anglo-Saxon version of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* at the Priory of Suthwyk. It is now in the British Museum, Otho B xi. We shall hear of it when we come to Bede.

The manuscript of the *Blooms* in Vitellius A 15 is clearly written, and easy to read. It occupies the earliest part of a volume, ending at the foot of folio 59. Oswald Cockayne first published it in *The Shrine*, 1868-9. A modern English version, closely following the original, appeared in the Jubilee Edition of Alfred's Works, 1852, vols. ii and iii.¹ The full Anglo-Saxon text, with a valuable Introduction, and with the Latin of the *Soliloquies* so far as the Anglo-Saxon follows the original, has since been published, by H. L. Hargrove, *Yale Studies in English*, xiii, New York, 1902. Mr. Hargrove has also published a new translation into modern English in the same series, No. xxii, 1904. In the absence of Mr. Hargrove in China, Professor Albert S. Cook, the general editor of the series, has given full permission to make use of these valuable publications.

The two books of *Soliloquies* occupy columns 425-68 in the first volume of the Benedictine Edition (Bassani, 1807) of the works of St. Augustine of Hippo; the date of composition of the books can be safely put as A.D. 386-7.

The editors remark that in the first book Augustine draws his own self to the life, desiring to attain to knowledge of God and of his soul. The second book is entirely devoted to a demonstration that truth can never die, whence follows

¹ Bell's edition.

the assurance of the immortality of the soul, the undeadliness, as Alfred puts it.

Augustine has himself described his purpose in writing the *Soliloquies* and in giving them that name. In his *Retractions*, i. 4, he says that in these two books he wrote of the things he most wished to know, interrogating himself and answering himself as if there were two, the *ego* and the *ratio*, the Man Augustine and the Reason, though he knew they were one, and thence he named the books *Soliloquies*.

In these *Retractions* Augustine calls attention to some flaws in his arguments in the *Soliloquies*. It will be well to collect them here, rather than break the argument to insert them. They are of value as showing the scrupulous care with which a voluminous writer, fifteen and a half centuries ago, aimed at the achievement of logical accuracy.

In my prayer I said, "God, who willest that none but the pure know truth." But it could be answered that many who are not pure know many true things. Nor is it defined what is the truth which none but the pure can know.

And where I said, "God, whose kingdom the whole world is, whom [or which] sense knows not"; if God is meant by the *whdm*, it should have been said, "whom bodily sense knows not"; but if the world is meant by *whom* [or *which*], the "world" is rightly understood to be the new heaven and the new earth; but there again the words "bodily sense" should have been used. But here and generally in my writings by "sense" I mean "bodily sense," and it is not necessary to go on repeating this explanation.

Where I said of the Father and the Son, "He who begets and He whom He begets is one,"¹ I ought to have said, "*are* one."¹ This, Truth itself says, "I and my Father are one."¹

When I said that the soul was blessed by understanding God, I should have added "by hope." When I said that the way to find wisdom was not *one* way, that does not sound right, as though there were any way other than Christ, Who said, "I am the Way." I ought to have avoided that offence to religious ears; for though that universal way is the one way, there are the ways of which the Psalmist speaks, "Shew me Thy ways, O Lord."

When I said "those things of the sense are utterly to be

¹ In each case *unum*, one thing, not *unus*.

avoided,"¹ I should have taken care not to be supposed to hold the view of the false philosopher Porphyry, that "every body is to be avoided."² But I did not say all things of the senses, but only "those things," namely, "corrupt things." I had better have said, "Such things of sense will not be in the new heaven and the new earth of the future age."

To make it quite clear to which of his works Augustine is referring in these corrections, he adds, "This work begins thus, Volventi mihi multa ac varia mecum." The *Soliloquies* begin with those words. Some such indication was necessary, for in the seventeenth volume of the Benedictine edition we have a very interesting book of considerable length under the title *Soliloquiorum animæ ad Deum Liber unus*, columns 1721-66, in thirty-seven chapters. The opening chapter, "Aspiration to the Knowledge and Love of God," strikes a note curiously similar to the note of the Soliloquies of St. Augustine which are the subject of our inquiry. "The Soliloquies of the soul to God" is a very intelligible phrase; it does not need the explanation which a continuous Dialogue of Soliloquies does need.

It is, of course, well known that the method of identifying a particular copy of a manuscript treatise, adopted in our *scriptoria*, was by giving not only the first words of the treatise, but also the first word of the second page of the manuscript.

The *Blooms* mentions a third book of study, the *De Videndo Deo*, "Of the Vision of God." This book is to be found in the second volume of the Benedictine edition of St. Augustine's works, columns 617-47. It appears in the form of an Epistle (147), in which Augustine shows to a correspondent, Paulina, that God cannot be seen by the eyes of the body. Augustine wrote a letter to another lady, an Italian widow, Epistle 92, refuting the opinion that God could be seen by the bodily eyes.

There are strong reasons for accepting the statement that King Alfred collected and wrote the *Blooms*. Whether the reasons are strong enough must remain a matter of opinion. Those of us who love the memory of the King could wish that there were not so much doubt of the authorship. We do not know of any one else in the early times of Anglo-Saxon literature who was likely to set himself to

¹ fugienda.

² fugiendum.

this task and carry it out in the masterful manner in which the work is done. It has been well said by Mr. Hargrove that in the First Book of the *Blooms* we are in the hands of a translator, in the Second of an adapter, in the Third of an original author. This development of mastery is characteristic of Alfred's manner and mind. It is difficult to imagine a scribe in a tenth or eleventh century Anglo-Saxon monastery having so large and firm a grasp, and an outlook so wide and inclusive. It might be replied with some force that it is not easy to imagine it in Alfred ; the book is much more like the work of a small committee of men fairly well read in the Latin Fathers, set to the task by a man of inquiring mind, who was anxious to have some few fundamental points made clear to him. Taking that view of the work, two passages, about which there can be no doubt, seem to have some relevance to our consideration. They are both of them quoted elsewhere in this present book, but it seems better to set them out here.

The first is Alfred's own Preface to the *Dialogues*. It clearly applies much more directly and correctly to the *Blossom-gatherings*. We mark quotations from Alfred by single inverted commas.

'I, Alfred, by the grace of God dignified with the honour of royalty, having distinctly understood, that of us to whom God hath given so much eminence of worldly distinction, it is specially required that we from time to time should subdue and bend our mind to the divine and spiritual law in the midst of this earthly misery, have asked my trusty friends to write for me out of godly books the instruction that followeth, that I may now and then contemplate the heavenly things in the midst of earthly troubles.'

That does not seem quite to fit the *Dialogues*, which, though divided into four books, was one book, not several ; and it dealt with details of curious things that had happened rather than the divine and spiritual law or the contemplation of heavenly things.

The second passage is from Asser :

On a certain day, we [Alfred and Asser] were sitting in the king's chamber, talking on all kinds of subjects, as was usual, and it happened that I read to him a quotation out of a certain book. He heard it attentively with both his ears, and addressed me with a thoughtful mind, showing

me a book which he carried in his bosom, wherein the daily courses, and psalms, and prayers which he had read in his youth, were written ; and he bade me write the same quotation in that book.

Asser proceeds to say that there was no room in the little book, so he took a new sheet and wrote the quotation, and on that same day three more quotations which had pleased him. From that day they talked daily on such subjects, and soon filled the sheet, and went on with others, the king "like a most productive bee" flying here and there asking questions, till he had collected many various flowers of divine writings. Then he became eager to interpret the quotations in Saxon, to teach others. He continued to learn the flowers collected by certain masters, and to reduce them into one book as he was then able, though mixed one with another, until it became almost as large as a psalter. This, Asser tells us, he called his *Encheiridion*, or *Manual*, *Handbook*, because he kept it at hand day and night and found no small consolation therein.

There can be no reasonable doubt that the name "*Blooms*," or "*Blossom-gatherings*," came from this account of Asser. On the other hand, there can scarcely be any doubt that the *Handbook* was of the nature of a Dictionary of Quotations, quite probably with glosses and notes, but nothing like the continuous argument of the *Blooms*. The suggestion mentioned in Mr. Hargrove's book, that this is the *Handbook*, would be very difficult to maintain. Alfred had passed very far from his *Handbook* when and if he wrote the *Blooms*.

It is said by Anglo-Saxon scholars that the vocabulary of the *Blooms* is practically the same as in the works which are known—or shall we say allowed—to be Alfred's. That the general treatment of the original Latin, and the general manner of the book, is very much the same as in the *Boethius* is undoubtedly true. Careful study appears to suggest that the *Blooms* represent a more developed stage of the mind that gave *Boethius* to the English people of Alfred's time ; but that may be due to the fact that Augustine's *Soliloquies* are in themselves more difficult than *Boethius's Consolation* ; the discussion of the nature of God and the immortality of the soul more difficult than the discussion of Plato's philosophy.

It will probably be allowed by those who definitely reject the Alfredian authorship of, or responsibility for, the *Blooms*, that the writer of the *Blooms* knew and admired Alfred's *Boethius*.

It has been assumed that the opening words of the Preface or Introduction to the *Blooms* are lost. We find the opening printed thus, ". . . gathered me then." But the manuscript, which is now beautifully orderly and clear, notwithstanding the tattered condition in which it had come to be, does not at all justify that. The opening sentence begins in the top left corner of the face of a sheet of parchment marked folio 4, with an illuminated capital G—not very clear—which occupies a depth of two spacious lines.¹ The sentence is certainly not incomplete. Whether the previous pages had earlier sentences of this treatise, or other matter, it is not possible to say conclusively. From the palæographical point of view it can scarcely be called probable that such a treatise, copied by so practised and skilled a scribe, would begin at the very top corner of its first page.

Another error of representation relates to the end of the manuscript, where it is said that there is "a break in the parchment." That is not so. The bottom line finishes quite clear and full, on the reverse of a sheet, and the concluding folio is lost, as is—or are—the first.²

If the first sheets did contain earlier sentences of this treatise, it is possible, more than possible, that they contained some phrase which might be used in the arguments for or against the authorship of King Alfred. As the Preface now stands, there does not appear to be any indication that it is written from the standpoint of a king, who was very much a king however modest in his kingship. There is no simile, or parallel, such as Alfred might have drawn from the experience and aims of his own life as prince or king. The author writes more like a timber-merchant, or as one who knew what it was to serve in a small way under a lord, building a humble cottage, living on the wild creatures, and eventually becoming his own master, and owner of his cottage and its enclosure. If all this is a parable of royalty, its meaning is unduly concealed. If it was written by Alfred without any mental reference to his kingship, it is a charmingly persuasive

¹ This is the full space occupied by the initial D of Drihten in the MS.

² See page 29.

and skilful introduction of his treatise to the mind of an ordinary man.

When we come to the treatise itself we shall see that it is far from being the case that there are no similes or parallels such as might naturally proceed from the mind of a king. The Anglo-Saxon author has at least three very effective parallels or illustrations from a king's experience. The first shows us a king's subjects journeying by all sorts of roads, good and bad, short and long, direct and winding, to visit the king's court. The second shows the accessibility and the helplessness of subjects in the king's prison. The third shows the dismissal of the king's chief minister, or his banishment under public clamour, and in either case his return to greater power than ever.

We may now proceed to a rendering of this striking Preface into modern English ; retaining some archaisms, to remind ourselves that our thoughts are being carried back, it may be more than a thousand years, to the original English version of a philosophical Latin book fifteen and a half centuries old.

ALFRED'S PREFACE TO THE "BLOOMS"

'GATHERED me then staves, and stud-shafts, and lay-shafts, and helves for each of the tools which I could work with, and bow-timbers, and bolt-timbers, for each of the works that I could work, as many as I might bear from the comeliest trees. Neither came I with a burden home, for I did not wish to bring all the wood home, even if I might bear it all. In every tree I saw something which I needed at home, therefore I advise every one who is able, and has many wains, that he guide his steps to the same wood where I cut the stud-shafts ; there fetch more for himself, and load his wain with fair rods, that he may wind many a neat wall, and set many a comely house, and build a fair enclosure of them ; and thereby may dwell merrily and softly, both winter and summer, so as I now yet have not done. But he who taught me, to whom the wood was pleasing, he may make me to dwell more softly in this temporary cottage on my way while I am in this world, and also in the everlasting home which he has promised us through Saint Augustine and Saint Gregory and Saint Jerome, and through many other holy fathers ; as I believe also that for the merits of all those he will both make this way more convenient than it was ere this, and especially

enlighten the eyes of my mind so that I may search out the right way to the everlasting home and the everlasting glory, and to the everlasting rest, which is promised us through those holy fathers. Be it so.

‘It is no wonder that men labour in timber-working, both in the out-leading, and in the building; but every man wishes, after he has built a cottage on his lord’s lease and by his help, that he may sometimes rest him therein, and hunt and fowl and fish, and use it in every way according to the lease, both on sea and land, until the time that he earn book-land¹ of everlasting heritage through his lord’s mercy. So may the wealthy giver do, who rules both these temporary cottages and the everlasting homes, may he who shaped both, and wields both, grant me that I be meet for each, both here to be profitable and thither to come.

‘Augustinus, Bishop of Carthage, wrought two books about his own Mind. The books are called *Soliloquiorum*, that is, of his mind’s musing and doubting; how his Reason answered his Mind, when the mind doubted about anything or wished to know anything which it could not before clearly understand.’

That is the whole of the Preface, as we have it now. It is a beautifully graphic introduction to the idea of gathering from the wide area of a spiritual treatise a number of various points, which, when collected and carefully arranged, form a spiritual home where the mind may dwell, happy and secure, till the time come for its passing to the glory of the eternal home.

After the Anglo-Saxon fashion, the discussion between Augustine and Reason, to which we must now turn, proceeds alternately with “Then quoth he” and “Then quoth I.” Our modern method is more convenient, and is in accordance with a Latin method, placing the name or initial of the speaker at the commencement of each speech. We shall take A. and R. for Augustine and Reason. Mr. Hargrove in his Anglo-Saxon text takes A. and G., the latter for *Gesceadwisnes*, Reason.

The whole arrangement of the work, and the *dramatis personæ*, the Ego and Reason, are so strikingly similar to Alfred’s *Boethius*, that in those times of few books it is almost impossible to believe that the two Anglo-Saxon works were independent creations.

¹ Fee simple, it is said.

CHAPTER II

The opening passage of Book I of the *Blooms*, in the Latin and in Alfred's English—Weakness of memory—Resort to prayer—The Prayer, with Alfred's expansions—Striking additions—Reason's questionings, in the Latin and in Alfred's English—The desire to know God—The love of friends—Alfred's insertion on geometry and a painted globe—The Academic philosophers, "nothing certain without doubt"—Alfred's simile of the ship's anchor—Access to Wisdom—The simile of access to the king's court—Wisdom the Eternal Sun.

IN order to give any full idea of Alfred's bold dealing with St. Augustine's Latin, as a translator or an adapter, it would be necessary to set side by side many passages of the Latin and the Anglo-Saxon. But that would be a lengthy process. We must confine ourselves to two typical passages, one of which is the opening of the First Book. Here Augustine advises the collector of spiritual truths not to trust to his memory, but to write down what he wishes to keep, that he may have it safe, and pass on to collect further truths. And since he may have many hindrances, beyond his own control, he must seek Divine help in prayer. Here again he must write down what he has prayed, that he may retain it and be permanently the stronger for it. Those who do not care to read Latin will find the English read consecutively.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE "BLOOMS."

The First Book, then, opens thus in the Latin :

Volventi mihi multa ac varia mecum diu, ac per multos dies sedulo quærenti memetipsum ac bonum meum, quidve mali evitandum esset, ait mihi subito sive ego ipse sive alius quis extrinsecus sive intrinsecus nescio. Nam hoc ipsum est quod magnopere scire molior. Ait ergo mihi Ratio, Ecce, fac te invenisse aliquid; cui commendabis, ut pergas ad alia?

A. Memorizæ scilicet.

R. Tantane illa est ut excogitata omnia bene servet?

A. Difficile est; immo non potest.

R. Ergo scribendum est. Sed quid agis quod valetudo tua scribendi laborem recusat? Nec ista dictari debent, nam solitudinem meram desiderant.

A. Verum dicis. Itaque prorsus nescio quid agam.

R. Ora salutem et auxilium, quo ad concupita pervenias, et hoc ipsum literis manda, ut prole tua fias animosior. Deinde quod invenis paucis conclusiunculis breviter collige. Nec modo cures invitationem turbæ legentium, paucis ista sat erunt civibus tuis.

A. Ita faciam.

The rendering of this into Anglo-Saxon shews masterful dealing with each part of the opening. We could not find a more characteristic example of the translator's treatment of his original. Throughout our account of the *Blooms* we shall call the translator Alfred. Alfred, then, begins thus :

Then, quoth he, his mind went oft asking and searching out various and rare things, and most of all about himself, what he was ; whether his mind and his soul were deadly and perishing, or it were aye living and eternal ; and again, about his good, what it was, and what good was best for him to do, and what evil to forlet.

Then answered me something, I know not what, whether myself or another thing, nor know I whether it was within or without ; but of which I soothly ween it was my Reason, and then it said to me, If thou have any good herd, who well knows to hold that which thou gettest and committest to him, show him to me ; but if thou have none so prudent, seek him till thou find him ; for thou canst not always both sit over that which thou hast gotten and also get more.

Then quoth I, To whom else shall I commit what else I get, but to my memory ?

R. Is thy memory so strong that it may hold everything which thou thinkest, and commendest to it to hold ?

A. Oh no ; neither mine nor any man's memory is so strong that it may hold everything that is committed to it.

R. Commit it then to letters, and write it ; but methinks, however, that thou art too unhale, that canst not write it all ; and though thou wert altogether hale, thou wouldest need to have a retired place, ' and leisure from every other thing, and a few known and able men with thee, who would not hinder thee anything but help thy ability.'

A. ' I have none of those, neither the leisure, nor other men's help, nor so retired a place that might suit me for such a work ' ; therefore I know not what I shall do.

R. I know not, then, aught better than that thou pray. Make thy wish to God, the Saviour of mind and body, that thou mayest thereby get health and what thou wishest. And when thou hast prayed, write then the prayer lest thou forget it, that thou be the worthier of thine ability. And pray in few words, deeply, with full understanding.

A. I will do as thou teachest me.

A very long and earnest prayer follows, in the course of which Alfred introduces many amplifications, and some long additions. Such amplifications are marked in our pages by the insertion of single inverted commas; but it must not be supposed that the parts not thus marked are mere translations from the Latin. It will have been seen how very far from mere translation Alfred's work is.

We may now turn to some of Alfred's expansions of Augustine's Prayer, marked, as has been said, by the insertion of single inverted commas.

O Lord, Thou hast wrought all things perfect, and nothing imperfect; to Thee is no creature untoward; though any thing will, it can not be so, 'for Thou hast shapen them all orderly, and peaceable, and so harmonious that none of them can altogether destroy another, but the ugly ever adorneth the beautiful. To Thee I call, Thou Who art the Father of the Son Who hath awakened us, and still arouseth us, from the sleep of our sins,' and warneth us to come to Thee.

I pray to Thee, O Lord, Who wieldest all the world; Whom we can not know bodily 'neither by eyes, nor by smell, nor by ears, nor by taste, nor by touch'; although such laws as we have, and such virtues as we have, we take 'all those that are good' from Thy realm, 'and from Thy realm we draw an example of all the good we perform.' He perisheth who forsaketh Thee. 'He who loveth Thee seeketh Thee; he who followeth after Thee hath Thee. Thy truths which Thou hast given us awaken us from the sleep of our sins.' Through Thee we overcome our foes, 'spiritual and carnal.'

Thou hast taught us to understand that 'worldly wealth,' which we looked upon as our own, is alien to us and transitory, and Thou hast also taught us to consider as our own what we looked upon as alien to us, 'to wit, the kingdom of heaven which we once despised. Thou Who hast taught us to do no unlawful thing, and hast also taught us not to mourn,'

even though our riches should wane. 'Thou Who hast taught us to subject our body to our mind.'

Thou Who didst overcome death when Thou Thyself didst arise, 'and also wilt make all men arise. Thou Who makest us all worthy of Thee, and cleanseest us from all our sins, and justifiest us, and hearest our prayers. Thou Who madest us of Thy household, and Who teachest us all righteousness, and always teachest us the good, and always dost us good, and leavest us not to serve an unrighteous lord, as we did aforetime.' Thou givest us understanding that we may overcome the error, that men's souls have, after this world, no reward 'for their deserts, either of good or of evil, whichever they do here.' Thou hast loosed us from the thralldom of other creatures, 'Thou always prearest eternal life for us, and always prearest us for eternal life.'

In the course of the prayer Alfred follows Augustine in dwelling upon the orderly government of the world by the Almighty, a note struck by the first amplification noted above. Augustine makes special mention of the perpetual and orderly changes of sun, moon, and seasons. Here Alfred makes the following striking addition :

'Likewise the sea and the rivers ; in the same manner all creatures suffer change. Howbeit, some vary in another manner, so that the same come not again where they formerly were, nor become just what they were ; but others come in their stead, as leaves on trees ; and apples, grass, plants, and trees, grow old and sere, and others come, wax green, and grow, and ripen ; wherefore they again begin to wither. And likewise all beasts and fowls, in such manner that it is now too long to reckon them all. Yea, even men's bodies wax old, just as other creatures do ; but just as they formerly lived more worthily than trees or other animals, so shall they arise more worthily on Doomsday, so that never afterwards shall their bodies become naught nor wax old ; and though the body had decayed, yet the soul was ever-living since first it was created.

'And all the creatures, about whom we say that they seem to us as inharmonious and unsteadfast, have yet somewhat of steadiness, because they are bridled with the bridle of God's commandments.'

In one striking passage, very apposite to Augustine's own

history, there are additions which do not accord with anything we know of Alfred's own life and experience. Thus :

I beseech Thee, Thou merciful 'benevolent and beneficent Lord,' receive me, Thy fugitive ; 'since once I was formerly Thine, and then fled from Thee to the devil, and fulfilled his will, enduring much misery in his service. But if to Thee it seemeth as it doth to me,' that I have long enough felt the pains I have suffered, and longer than I have served Thy foes, do Thou receive me, Thine own servant, for I am fleeing from them. 'Behold, did not they receive me even before I had fled from Thee to them ? Never again restore me to them, now that I have sought Thee.'

The prayer ended, we come to the real beginning of the book. We will take one more example of the Latin original and of Alfred's dealing with it.

A. Ecce oravi Deum.

R. Quid ergo scire vis ?

A. Hæc ipsa omnia quæ oravi.

R. Breviter ea collige.

A. Deum et animum scire cupio.

R. Nihilne plus ?

A. Nihil omnino.

R. Ergo incipe quærere. Sed prius explica quomodo tibi si demonstretur Deus possis dicere sat est.

A. Nescio quomodo mihi demonstrari debeat ut dicam sat est : non enim credo me scire aliquid sic quomodo scire Deum desidero.

R. Quid ergo agimus ? Nonne censes prius tibi esse sciendum quomodo tibi Deum scire satis sit ; quo cum perveneris non amplius quæras ?

A. Censeo quidem, sed quo pacto fieri possit non video. Quid enim Deo simile umquam intellexi ut possim dicere quomodo hoc intelligo sic volo intelligere Deum ?

Alfred renders this as follows :

A. Now I have done as thou desiredst me. Now I have prayed.

R. I see that thou hast prayed ; but say now what thou desiredst, or wouldest have.

A. I would understand and know all that I now sang.¹

¹. A curious touch of Boethius.

THE BLOOMS OF ST. AUGUSTINE 15

R. Gather¹ then, from all those things about which thou hast sung,² that which seems to thee to be the most needful to thee, and most profitable to be known ; and clothe it then with few words and tell it me.

A. I will soon tell it thee. God I would understand, and my own soul I would know.

R. Wouldest thou know aught more ?

A. Many things I wish to know which I know not. I wish not, however, to know any thing more earnestly than this.

R. Search after it then, and seek what thou askest. And tell me first what thou most intimately knowest, and say then to me, Enough known to me will God and my soul be, if they shall be as known to me as this thing is.

A. I know of nothing so known to me as I would that God were.

R. What must we do then, if thou knowest not the measure ? Thou shouldest know when it seemed to thee enough ; and if thou ever shouldest come to that, that thou then shouldest not go further than that, but shouldest seek elsewhat, lest thou shouldest desire anything above measure.

A. I know what thou wouldest ; I should show thee by some example ; but I cannot, for I know nothing like God, that I can say to thee, Thus certainly would I know God, as I know this thing.

So far we have followed the Latin as given above. Alfred continues :

R. I wonder at thee, why thou sayest that thou knowest nothing like God, and even yet knowest not what He is.

A. If I knew aught like Him, I would love that very vehemently. But since I know nothing like Him, I love nothing but Him and my own soul ; and yet I know not what either of them is.

R. Thou sayest that thou lovest nothing but God and thy soul. If then that is so, dost thou then love no other friend ?

A. Why, if I love a soul, should I not love my friend ? Has not he a soul ?

R. If thou lovest thy friend for this, that he has a soul, why lovest thou not each thing that has a soul ; why lovest thou not mice, and flies ?

¹ An evident reference to the Preface and to the name of Alfred's treatise.

² A curious touch of Boethius.

A. I love not them, for they are fleshly beasts, not men.

R. How, have not thy friends bodies, as beasts have ?

A. I love them not for that, but because they are men and have reason in their mind, which I love. Yea, even in manners, those whom I hate, I hate because they turn the good of reason into evil ; for each of these is left free to me, both to love what is good and to hate what is evil. Therefore I love every one of my friends, some less, some more ; and each of them whom I love more than another, I love him so much more than the other as I understand he has a better will than the other, and a will to make his reason more profitable.

R. Well enough thou understandest it, and right enough. But if any one should now say to thee, that he could teach thee how thou mayest understand God so clearly that he were as well known to thee as is to thee now thy servant Alipius,¹ would there then in that seem to thee enough, or how much wouldest thou thank him for it ?

A. "Thanks," I would say ; not the more, however, would I say "Enough."

R. Why ?

A. Alipius is more known to me than God is, and yet I know him not so well as I would.

R. Look, now, that thou desire not above measure ; now thou measurest them together, wouldest know God so as Alipius ?

A. No, I make them not the more alike because I name them together. But I say that a man oft knows more about the higher than about the lower. I know now about the moon, how it will fare to-morrow, and other nights ; but, which is lower, I know not what I shall eat to-morrow.

It is evident that *A.* here gives *R.* a great chance ; he has said positively that he knows exactly what the moon will do. *R.* is not slow to take the chance, and the discussion turns on the question what there is that a man certainly knows. We may pass over a few pages, and take up the argument where it enters upon a fresh line ; still marking Alfred's insertions by single inverted commas.

R. Methinks now that it seems to thee that it is one thing that a man knows, another that a man only supposes.

¹ In Epistle 119 of the collection of Augustine's epistles, Consentius, writing to Augustine, mentions Alypius, bishop, thy brother.

A. Yes, so methinks ; therefore I would now that thou explain to me what is betwixt them, or what a man certainly knows.

Here comes in a characteristic insertion of Alfred's.

R. ' Knowest thou that thou learnedst the craft which we call geometry ; in which craft thou learnedst, painted on a sphere or on an apple or on an egg,¹ that thou mightest by the painting understand the revolution of this globe, and the path of the constellations ? Knowest thou now what thou learnedst in the same craft, by a line drawn along the middle of the sphere ? Knowest thou now that to thee was there shewn the places of the twelve constellations, and the path of the sun ? '

A. Yea, enough well I know what the line betokens.

R. Dreadest thou not now the academic philosophers, ' who said that nothing ever was certain without a doubt,' now thou sayest thou hast no doubt of this ?

A. No, I dread naught much against myself, ' for they said that no man ever was wise ' ; therefore I am not ashamed though I were not ; for I know that I am not yet wise. But if I ever become as wise as they are, then will I do as they teach, ' until I will say that I know without doubt that which methinks I know.'

R. I gainsay naught that thou do so. But I would know, how thou sayest thou knowest about the line ' that was painted on the sphere on which thou learnedst about the revolution of this globe,' I wish to know whether thou also knowest about the sphere ' on which the line was drawn ? '

A. Yea, both of them I know ; ' no man can mistake that.'

R. Whether learnedst thou by the eyes, or by the mind ?

A. By both I learned it ; first, by the eyes, and afterwards by the mind ; the eyes brought me into the understanding ; after I understood it, I left off the looking with the eyes, and thought ; ' for it seemed to me that I could contemplate much more than I could see of it, after the eyes had fastened it to my mind ; as a ship brings a man over sea. When he then goes to land, then leaves he the ship to stand ; for it seems to him then that he can go more easily without than with it. Easier it seems to me, however, to go with a ship on dry land, than it seems to me to learn any

¹ It might be that Columbus had such a painted egg, which he set on end by breaking it.

craft with the eyes without the reason, though the eyes must sometimes help thereto.'

R. 'For these things it is needed that thou look with the mind's eye right to God, as right as the ship's anchor-cable is stretched right from the ship to the anchor; and fasten the eyes of thy mind on God, as the anchor is fastened on the earth. Though the ship be out on the sea, among the billows, it will be sound, untobroken,¹ if the cable holds out, for the one end is fast on the earth and the other in the ship.'

A. 'What is that which thou callest the mind's eyes ?

R. 'Reason, besides other crafts.'

A. 'What are those other crafts ?'

R. 'Wisdom (or knowledge), and humility, and wariness, and moderation, and righteousness, and mercy, discretion, steadiness, and well-wishing, cleanness, and continency. With these anchors thou shalt fasten the cable on God, which shall hold the ship of thy mind.'

Later on, still discussing Wisdom, we find the simile of access to the king's court :

R. 'Said I not formerly that he who would feel the bare body must feel it with bare hands ? And I say also if thou wilt behold Wisdom itself thus bare, that thou must not allow any cloth between thine eyes and it, nor even any mist; albeit to that thou canst not come in this present life, though I enjoin it upon thee, and though thou wish it.'

Wherefore no man ought to despair, though he have not so sound eyes as he who can look the sharpest; even he who can look the sharpest of all can not himself see the sun just as it is while he is in this present life. Yet no man hath such weak eyes that he can not live by the sun, and use it, if he can see at all, unless he be purblind.

'Moreover, I can teach unto thee other parables about wisdom. Consider now whether any man seeketh there the king's home where he is in town, or in his court, or his army, or whether it seemeth to thee that they all must come thither by the same road; on the contrary, I suppose they would come by very many roads: some would come from afar, and would have a road very long and very bad and very difficult; some would have a very long and very direct and very good road; some would have a very short and yet hard and strait and foul one; some would have a short and smooth and good

¹ The Kirkdale sundial of Earl Tostig's time has "tobroken and tofallen."

one ; and yet they all would come to one and the same lord, some more easily, some with more difficulty ; neither do they come thither with like ease, nor are they there alike at ease. Some are in more honour and in more ease than others ; some in less, some almost without, except the one that he loveth. So is it likewise with wisdom. Each one who wisheth it and who anxiously prayeth for it, he can come to it and abide in its household and live near it ; yet some are nearer it, others further from it ; just so is every king's court : some dwell in cottages, some in halls, some on the threshing-floor, some in prison ; and yet they all live by the favour of one lord, just as all men live under one sun, and by its light see what they see. Some look very carefully and very clearly ; some see with great difficulty ; others are stark blind, and yet use the sun. But just as the visible sun lighteth the eyes of our body, so wisdom lighteth the eyes of our mind, which is our understanding. And just as the eyes of the body are more sound, thus to use more of the sun's light, so is it also with the mind's eyes, that is, the understanding : just by so much as that is sounder, by so much more may it see the eternal sun, which is Wisdom.'

He who wisheth to see wisdom with his mind's eyes must begin very gradually, and then little by little mount nearer and nearer by steps, ' just as if he were climbing on a ladder, and wished to ascend some sea-cliff. If he then ever cometh up on the cliff, he may look both over the shore and over the sea, which then lieth beneath him, and also over the land that formerly was above him.' But if it seemeth good to us, let us stop here for this day, and to-morrow seek further after the same thing which we before sought after.

A. ' Nay, not at all ; but I humbly pray thee that thou weary not, nor leave off the conversation here ; say something more clearly about it, so that I may more clearly feel and understand something concerning this Wisdom. And bid me what thou wilt, I will understand it if it lies in my power.'

CHAPTER III

The end of Alfred's Book I and the beginning of his Book II—Desire to know God and himself—Is he undeadly?—Three things he would know about himself—Alfred's departure from the Latin of the *Soliloquies*, and use of other books and writers—The argument about himself continued—Wisdom the highest good—Shall the soul know more after the death of the body?—Is the soul everlasting?—Would you believe Theodosius and Honorius rather than Almighty God?—Or thyself and thy companions rather than the Apostles and Prophets?—No one of God's creatures entirely passes away—Will the soul begin the everlasting life as in childhood, and grow as children grow?—Reason bids the Mind study the *De Videndo Deo*—Close of Book II—Book III entirely Alfred's own—Much less question and answer—Alfred on Dives—Striking similes of the king's prison and the dismissal of a king's ministers—Close of the *Blossoms*.

W^e may now pass on to the concluding chapter of the First Book and the opening chapters of the Second.

A. Thanks be to God for the share that I know! I will now study it, and hold it as carefully as I can. If I doubt of anything, then will I shew it thee soon.

R. Cleave fast to God, and betake thyself wholly to God; and wish not too much for thine own will over His; but be his man, not thy own; and grant that thou art His servant, then will He raise thee for that, always nigher to Himself and nigher; and will let naught be adverse to thee. If He, however, shall permit that aught adverse shall come to thee, then shall that be for thy good, though thou be not able to understand it.

A. 'That I hear, and that I believe, and this instruction I will follow as I best can, and pray God that I may be able to perform it, as thou long before hast taught me; teach me if thou wilt.'

R. Do that to me first, and 'tell me again after thou hast studied this, what thou likest of this, and if thou doubt aught about any of these things, then tell thou me that.'

'Here end the Blossoms of the First Book.'

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE "BLOSSOMS"

'Here beginneth the Gathering of the Blossoms of the Second Book.'

THE BLOOMS OF ST. AUGUSTINE 21

A. Oh long have we now been at leisure, and we have not searched after that 'which thou formerly promisedst me.'

R. 'Let us better it. Let us take it in the beginning of another book.'

A. Let us do that.

R. Let us believe that God is our help.

A. Willingly would I believe it if I had power ; but 'me thinks that belief is not in our power in the measure which we there seek, unless God give it us.'

R. 'Both belief and all the goods that we shall have ; therefore I wot not what we can do at all without His help. I advise thee, however, that thou begin it ; pray in few words, as thou most inwardly canst, and ask that which is most needful to thee.'

A. Then said I, Lord, Lord, Thou Who abidest always unchangeable, give me 'the two things which I have always wished' ; that is, that I may know Thee and myself.

'Now I have done as Thou advisedst me' ; now I have prayed.

R. I hear what thou wouldest know ; but I would know first from thee whether thou knowest without doubt whether thou dost exist or not, 'whether thou live or not live.'

A. 'The two things which I certainly know.'

R. What more wishest thou to know ?

A. Whether I be undeadly.

R. I hear thou wouldest alway live.

A. That I grant.

R. Shalt thou then know enough, if I make thee know thou mayest alway live ?

A. 'That is a very good desire ; say, however, what I asked after, whether I should be aye living ; and then I would wit whether I, after the parting of the body and the soul, should aye know more than I now know of all that which now I have long wished to know ; for I can understand naught better in a man than that he know, and naught worse than that he not know.'

R. Now I wot all what thou wouldest. One is, that thou wouldest be ; another, that thou wouldest live ; a third, that thou wouldest know. And I wot also why thou wouldest those three things. Therefore thou wouldest, that thou wouldest live ; and therefore wouldest thou live, that thou wouldest know. And these three things I hear that thou

certainly knowest. Thou knowest that thou art, and thou knowest that thou livest, and thou knowest also that thou knowest somewhat, though thou knowest not all that thou wouldest.

A. That is sooth.

That ends Chapter I of the Second Book of Augustine's *Soliloquies*. From this point the Old English Version so far departs from the Latin that it quite ceases to be anything like a translation. It introduces matter from other sources besides Book II of the *Soliloquies*. We can trace Augustine's *Epistle* 147 (*De Videndo Deo*), his *City of God*, Gregory's *Dialogues and Morals*, Jerome's *Commentary on St. Luke and the Vulgate*.

To maintain the continuity of Alfred's work, we must repeat the closing words of Reason and the opening words of Augustine's reply. All that follows the words "That is sooth" is Alfred's own.

R. Now I wot all that thou wouldest. One is that thou wouldest be ; another, that thou wouldest live ; another, that thou wouldest know. . . . Three things I hear that thou certainly knowest. Thou knowest that thou art ; and thou knowest that thou livest ; and thou knowest also that thou knowest somewhat, though thou knowest not all thou wouldest.

A. That is sooth. ' Those three things I know and those three things I would. I would be, because I would live. What would I care whether I were, if I lived not ? Or what would I care for life, if I knew naught ?

R. ' Now I hear that thou lovest all that thou lovest for these three things—thou lovest that thou art, because thou wouldest live ; and therefore thou wouldest live, because thou wouldest know. By that I understand that thou lovest wisdom above all other things, which methinks is thy highest good.

A. ' Sooth thou sayest me. What is wisdom else but the highest good ? Or what is the highest good but that each man in this world by so much love God as he loves wisdom, whether he love it much or love it little or love it middling ? By the measure he loves God by that he loves wisdom.

R. ' Enough rightly thou hast understood it. But I would that we went back where we formerly were. Thou

knowest that thou art, and also knowest that thou livest, and knowest that thou knowest somewhat, though thou knowest not so much as thou wouldest ; and a fourth thing which thou wouldest know, that is whether these three things were all everlasting or were not : or whether any of them were everlasting ; or if they were all everlasting, whether any of them after this world, in the everlasting life, either waxed or waned.

A. ' All my yearning thou hast understood very rightly.

R. ' About what doubtest thou now ? Didst thou not formerly grant that God was everlasting and almighty, and had made two rational and everlasting creatures as we formerly said, that is, angels and men's souls, to whom he has given everlasting gifts, which gifts they need never let go ? If thou now rememberest this and believest this, then wotest thou without doubt that thou art, and ever shalt be, and ever shalt live, and ever shalt know somewhat, though thou shalt not know all that thou wouldest.

' Now thou knowest about the three things after which thou askedst,¹ that is, (1) whether thou aye shouldest be, (2) whether thou aye shouldest know somewhat, (3) whether thou after the parting of the body and the soul shouldest know more than thou now knowest or less. After the fourth we must yet search, now thou knowest these three, until thou know that also.

A. ' Very orderly thou settest it forth. But I will yet, however, say, what I there firmly believe, about what I there yet doubt. I doubt naught about God's everlastingness, and about his almightiness ; for it cannot be otherwise of the Trinity and Unity, which was without beginning and is without end ; therefore I cannot elsehow believe, for He has shapen so great and so many and so wonderfully seen creatures ; and steers them all, and keeps them all within bounds, and one while clothes them with the winsomest beauties, another while again unclothes and unbeautifies them. He governs the kings who have the most power on this world, who like all men are born, and eke like other men die, whom He lets reign while He will. For such and many such things I wot not how I can doubt of His everlastingness ; nor eke of the life of our souls do I now the more doubt aught, but I doubt yet about their everlastingness, whether they be aye living.

¹ Was this continual iteration the regular method of teaching when men had to trust to memory ?

R. 'About what doubttest thou this ? Are not all holy books nigh full about the undeadliness of the soul ? But methinks now that too long to reckon all, and too wearisome for thee to hear.

A. 'I have heard a good deal of it, and I also believe it ; but I wish rather now to hear it than to believe it.

R. 'I wonder why thou yearnest so strongly and so certainly to know what no man in this prison of this present life ever could certainly know as thou wishest, though many yearned that they in this present life understood it more clearly than many others.

'Behold now I know that thou hast to-day the lord whom in all things thou trustest better than thyself ; and so also hath many a servant who hath a less powerful lord than thou hast. And I know that thou hast also many friends whom thou trustest well enough, though thou dost not trust them altogether as well as thou dost thy lord. How seemeth it to thee now, if thy lord should tell thee some news which thou never before heardest, or if he should say to thee that he saw something which thou never sawest ? Doth it seem to thee that thou wouldest doubt his statement at all, because thou didst not see it thyself ?

A. 'Nay, nay ; verily there is no story so incredible that I would not believe it if he should tell it. Yea, I even have many companions, whom, if they should say that they themselves saw it or heard it, I would believe just as well as if I myself saw it or heard it.

R. 'I hear now that thou believest thy lord better than thyself, and thy companions quite as well as thyself. Thou dost very rightly and very reasonably, in that thou hast such good faith in them. But I would that thou shouldest tell me whether Honorius, the son of Theodosius, seem to thee wiser than Christ, the Son of God.

A. 'Nay, verily ; nowhere near. But methinks that it is difficult for thee to compare them together. Honorius is very good, although his father was better ; Theodosius was very devout and very prudent and very rightly of my lord's kin ; and so is he who still liveth there. I will honour them just as a man should a worldly lord, and the others of whom thou didst formerly speak just as their masters, and as one should honour the King Who is the King of all kings, and the Creator and Ruler of all creatures.

R. 'Now I hear that the Almighty God pleaseth thee

better than Theodosius, and Christ, the Son of God, better than Honorius, the son of Theodosius. I blame thee not that thou lovest both, but I advise thee to love the higher lords more, for they know all that they wish and can perform all that they wish.

A. 'All that thou sayest is true. I believe it all.

R. 'Now I hear that thou trustest the higher lord better. But I would know whether it seem to thee that thy worldly lords have wiser and truer servants than the higher lords have. Trustest thou now thyself and thy companions better than thou dost the Apostles, who were the servants of Christ Himself? Or the Patriarchs? Or the Prophets, through whom God Himself spake to His people what He would?

A. 'Nay, nay; I trust not ourselves so well, nor anywhere near, as I do them.

R. 'What spake God, then, more often, or what said He more truly through His Prophets to His people, than about the immortality of souls? Or what spake the Apostles and the holy Fathers more truly, if not about the eternity of souls and their immortality? Or what meant Christ, when He said in His Gospel, The unrighteous shall go into the eternal torments and the righteous into eternal life? Now thou hearest what said Christ and His Apostles; and I heard before that thou didst doubt nothing of the word of Honorius and his servants. Why doubttest thou, then, about the words of Christ, the Son of God, and the words of His Apostles which they themselves uttered? They spake to us more of such like words than we can count, and with many examples and proofs that explained it to us. Why canst thou then not believe them all; and why saidst thou before that thou wast their man?

A. 'So I say still, and say that I believe them, and also know exactly that it is all true that God either through Himself or through them said; for there are more of these sayings in the holy books than I can ever count. Therefore I am ashamed that I ever doubted about it, and I confess that I am rightly convinced, and I shall always be much happier when thou dost convince me of such things than I ever was when I convinced another man. All this I knew before, but I forgot it, as I fear I shall this.

R. 'I wonder thou couldst ever suppose that men's souls were not eternal, for thou clearly enough knewest that they are the highest and the most blessed of the creatures of God.

And thou knowest also clearly enough that He alloweth no creature entirely to pass away so that it cometh to naught, not even the most unworthy of all, but He beautifieth and adorneth all creatures, and again taketh away their beauty and adornments, and yet again reneweth them. They all so change, however, that they pass away, and suddenly come again and return to that same beauty and to the same winsomeness for the children of men in which they were before Adam sinned.'

The discussion proceeds further on these lines, all Alfred's own, and this portion of the *Soliloquies* is brought to an end as follows :

A. 'I wot now that the life shall aye be, and the wit ; but I dread that it be in that world as it is here in children. I ween not that the life there shall be without reason, any more than it is here in children. Then there will be too little winsomeness in that life.

R. 'I hear now what thou wouldest wit ; but I cannot tell it thee by few words. If thou wilt openly wit it, then must thou seek it in the book which we call *De Videndo Deo*. This book is called in English *Of the Sight of God*. But be now of good mood, and study what thou hast now learned ; and let us both pray Him that He help us, for He promised that He would help every one who called to Him and wished aright. And He promised without any doubt that He would teach us after this world that we might full certainly know full wisdom and full soothfastness ; which thou mayest hear more openly in the book which I named to thee *De Videndo Deo*.

'Here end the Blossoms of the Second Book which we call *Soliloquiorum*.

A. 'Then said I, Now thou hast ended the speeches which thou hast gathered out of these two books, and hast not yet answered me about that which I now last asked, that was about my witting. I asked thee whether after the dividing of the body and the soul it should wax or wane, or do both as here it doeth.

R. 'How ! said I not to thee before that thou must seek it in the book which we then spoke about ? Learn the book, then shalt thou find it there.

A. 'It is not meet for me now to study all that book, but I would that thou told me.'

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This Reason proceeds to do. The Anglo-Saxon account occupies two and a half pages of Hulme's text, four 8vo pages in Hargrove's rendering. All is entirely Alfred. There is much less of question and answer here than in the two books on the Soliloquies ; for the most part Reason goes straight on, as does St. Augustine in the letter to Paulina which has the separate title *De Videndo Deo*.

We can give the concluding portion, with Alfred's homily on Dives and Lazarus, and his remarkable references to a king's prison where the prisoners could be freely visited and conversed with ; and his still more remarkable reference to a king's minister being dismissed by the king or driven out by popular clamour, and in either case returning to power stronger than he was before. How very near Alfred was to this present generation !

‘Then answered he his own thought and said : Why supposest thou that the departed good who have full and complete freedom shall know what they wish to know, either in this present life or in that to come ? Why supposest thou that they have no memory of their friends in this world, inasmuch as the wicked Dives feared the same torments for his friends in hell as he had merited ? It was he whom Christ spake of in His Gospel that besought Abraham to send Lazarus the beggar to Him, that He with his little finger might place a drop of water on his tongue and therewith cool his thirst. Then said Abraham : Nay, my son, but consider that thou didst withhold from him all comforts when ye were both in the body, thou having every good, and he every misfortune. He can not now do more for thy comfort than thou wouldst then do for him. Then said the rich man : Abraham, if that can not be, send him to my five brethren who are still on the earth where I was, that he may tell them in what punishment I am, and may admonish them to take warning not to come hither. Then said Abraham : Nay, nay, they have the books of the Holy Fathers with them on earth. Let them study them and believe them. If they do not believe them, neither will they believe Lazarus though he come to them.

‘Now we can hear that both the departed good and the wicked know all that happeneth in this world and also in the world in which they are. They know the greatest part—though they do not know it all before Doomsday, ær domes

dæge—and they have very clear remembrance of their kin and friends in the world. And the good help the good, every one of them another, as much as they can. But the good will not have mercy on their wicked friends because the latter do not wish to depart from their evil, even so as Abraham would not pity the rich man who was his own kin because he perceived he was not so humble to God as he ought rightly to be. The wicked, then, can neither do their friends nor themselves any good, because they were formerly, when they were in this world, of no aid either to themselves or to their friends who had passed away before them. But it shall be with them even as it is with men who are in this world brought into the prison of some king, and can see their friends all day and ask about them what they desire, albeit they can not be of any good to them nor the prisoners to them; they have neither the wish nor the ability. Wherefore the wicked have the greater punishment in the world to come, because they know the honour and the glory of the good; and all the more because they recall all the honour that they had in this world; and, moreover, they know the honour which those have who shall then be left behind them in this world.

‘Howbeit the good then, who have full freedom, see both their friends and their enemies, just as in this life lords and rulers often see together both their friends and their enemies. They see them alike and know them alike albeit they do not love them alike. And again, the righteous, after they are out of this world, shall recall very often both the good and the evil which they had in this world, and rejoice very much that they did not depart from their Lord’s will, either in easy or in hidden things, while they were in this world. Just so some king in this world may have driven one of his favourites from him; or he may have been forced from the king against both of their wills: then hath he [the ex-favourite] many torments and many mishaps in his exile, yet he may come to the same lord whom before he was with, and there be much more worshipful than he was. Then he will recall the misfortunes which he had there in his exile, and yet not be the more unhappy. But I myself saw or believed what more untrustworthy men told me than those were who told me what we are seeking. Must I not needs do one of two things—either believe some men or none? Methinks now that I know who built the city of Rome, and

also many another thing which existed before our day, all of which I cannot sum up. I know not who built the city of Rome for the reason that I myself saw it. Nor even know I of what kin I am, nor who my father or mother was, except by hearsay. I know that my father begat me and my mother bare me, but I do not know because I myself saw it, but because it was told me. Howbeit not so trustworthy men told that to me as those were who said that which we now for a long time have sought for, and I believe it still.'

Reason thereupon finishes the whole argument thus :

R. 'Therefore he seems to me a very foolish man, and inexcusable, who will not eke his knowledge the while that he is in this world, and always wish and will that he may come to the everlasting life where nothing shall be dark or unknown.

'Here end the queathings which King Alfred gathered out of the book which we call in' [English, *Of the Sight of God*].

The Jubilee edition fills in the hiatus with " Latin, [*De Videndo Deo*]." This is wrong; the word " Latin " is not there. The last page of the manuscript as we have it ends with " we call in," and " English " is the more probable suggestion. It is true that at the end of Books I and II we have " which we call *Soliloquiorum*," but Alfred does not feel it necessary to say " in Latin "; besides which he has not given *Soliloquiorum* in an English form, as he has the *De Videndo Deo*.

We have seen that there is no certainty of this treatise being the work of King Alfred, or even of its having been written under his instruction, or, indeed, in his time. But this at least is certain, that the production of such a book in Anglo-Saxon times, by an English author, for English readers, to meet an English need, is evidence of a high standard of learning, of intelligence, and of spiritual thought, interest, and enquiry, of which we, the far-off descendants, may well be proud; and, it may justly be added, of which we could wish there was more abundant evidence in our own time.

THE DIALOGUES OF GREGORY THE GREAT

CHAPTER I

The three Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, and the edition—The Benedictine editors and their Introduction—The Greek version—Greek bishops of Rome—Latin titles in Greek—Gibbon on the *Dialogues*—Gregory and his deacon Peter—Bede on the *Dialogues*—Date of the *Dialogues*—Dr. Dudden on the *Dialogues*—Miraculous stories—Augustine's letter on miracles in England, and Gregory's reply—Lanfranc and St. Aldhelm—The Pope and St. Edward the Confessor—Arabic, Old French, and Old Icelandic versions of the *Dialogues*—An English version dedicated to Anne of Denmark in 1608.

THE manuscripts of King Alfred's version of the Four Books of the *Dialogues of Gregory the Great* are three. One is at the British Museum, Cotton, Otho C 1; another is at Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 322, formerly catalogued otherwise; the third is in the Bodleian, Hatton 76. They may be referred to as O, C, H, respectively.

C is complete, except that the sheet after folio 142 has been cut out, the missing sheet having contained part of the fortieth chapter of the Fourth Book, "Of the Soul of Paschasius the Deacon," which will be found at p. 69. O and C used to be treated as representing two separate translations from the Latin; they are now regarded as having come from a common stock. Where they differ, O is held to adhere more closely to the original translation or to the Latin. H is regarded as a new handling of the old translation. O and H appear to have been in the Library of Worcester in the twelfth century. H has only the first two books, with many gaps.

The full Anglo-Saxon text was published at Leipzig in 1900 by Hans Hecht, in Grein's *Bibliothek von Angelsächsischen Prosa*, 5th Band, under the title *Bischofs Werferth von Worcester übersetzung der Dialoge Gregors des Grossen*, from a copy by Henry Johnson.

The edition of Gregory's original works in Latin which is used for our present purpose is the four-volume Benedictine edition, Paris, 1705. The *Pastoral Care* and the *Dialogues* are in the second volume.

So far as bulk is concerned, the *Dialogues* are a much larger work than the *Pastoral Care*. The *Pastoral Care* occupies 100 columns in the Paris edition of 1705. The *Dialogues* occupy 163 columns in the Latin and 163 columns (in some cases fuller than the Latin columns) in the Greek translation, of which further mention will be made. Thus the *Dialogues* are quite half as long again as the *Pastoral Care*.

The Benedictine editors provide us with a very interesting account of various questions which had from time to time been raised in connexion with the authorship and purpose and authenticity of the *Dialogues*.

The authorship had been attributed to Gregory II, but the editors had no difficulty in showing that internal evidence abundantly proved that so late a date as Gregory II (715-731) was impossible. Others had maintained that the *Dialogues* were by an anonymous writer who concealed himself under the name of Gregory. But the editors were clear that the *Dialogues* were the genuine work of Gregory I.

A more serious objection had been that the numerous asserted miracles which Gregory accepts show him to have been a man too credulous, some said a rude and stolid simpleton. This objection the editors met by asking if these critics believed the story of the ass of Balaam and the ass's jawbone of Samson, or the stater in the fish's mouth, or the demons in the herd of swine? or, again, did they remember that the Lord promised (John xiv. 12) that they who believed on Him should do the things that He did, and greater things than these? There had not been any time, the Benedictines point out, at which the fulfilment of this large promise would have been so opportune as it was at the time of Gregory the Great and his more immediate predecessors. The barbarians were being brought in by their contact with civilization, and they were specially affected by miraculous signs. At the same time many Christians were erring from the true faith in the period which the *Dialogues* cover, nearly all of the sixth century, and they, too, needed special sign to bring them back. The Ostro-Goths were Arian heretics. The Longobards were Arians

or idolaters. There were idolatrous Franks in Gaul. The Visi-Goths and other barbarians were hostile to Christianity. Britain was in the hands of new holders of the land, and was groaning under the reinfliction of idolatrous worship of demons. How such a state of things cried out for miraculous evidence !

The evidence came. The result was wonderful. Within not many years, the Benedictines say, the Longobards had forsworn the Arian impiety. The Goths had accepted the Catholic faith in Spain under King Reccared. The Angles accepted Christ. All, in short, were received into the Christian and Orthodox Faith.

The Longobards, the editors continue, held most of Italy. Their conversion was in great part due to the *Dialogues* of Gregory, as Paulus Diaconus tells. Gregory sent the *Dialogues* to the Longobards, and Queen Theodelinda used them to persuade the king and his race and the subject peoples to the Catholic Faith. Many of the miracles had taken place while the Longobard army had been looking on. If the stories were untrue, the Longobards, whom Gregory described as more like bears in their ferocity than men, would have laughed them to scorn, and would have blazed more than ever against the Faith and against the Roman Church. The very contrary was the fact. Thus King Agilulf accepted the Christian Faith, restored the property he had taken away from churches, and paid due honour to the bishops.

Then errors came and waxed wanton. The resurrection of the flesh and the immortality of the soul were brought into question. Gregory himself had at one time doubted the resurrection of the flesh. His deacon Peter told him (*Dial.* iii. 38) that many Christians—he does not say heretics, on the contrary, he says within the bosom of Holy Church—doubted of the immortality of the soul after the dissolution of the body. He besought him, for the spiritual good of many, to set down some reason for proof thereof, or the examples of some souls which have testified the same, “if you remember any”: to the end that those which mistrust may learn that the soul doth not come to an end with the body. Gregory replied that it was a hard matter for so very busy a man as he to undertake, but if it might prove profitable to any, he would certainly postpone his own inclination to the good of his neighbours, and would deal

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with this question in a fourth book of his *Dialogues*. He proceeded to do so. This discourse between Gregory and Peter closely resembles the later parts of the "Blossom-gatherings" (see p. 25).

The editors of the Latin *Dialogues* point out that Gregory observed the laws of history in his narration of miraculous stories. In some of the stories he was himself personally concerned. For all, he gives his authority. Not that no errors crept into his book. For example, Gregory described St. Paulinus as carried away into Africa by the Wandals when they devastated Campania. But it was long after the time of St. Paulinus that the Wandals devastated Italy and took Nola. The natural explanation is that the Goths, of whom all parts of the story were true, were called Wandals by mistake.

A long list of Holy Fathers is given in the editorial preface, who have recorded the occurrence of miracles.

Finally, those who disliked the miraculous parts of the *Dialogues* might pass them over. They would find higher things than miracles. Very many dogmas were explained and asserted. The *Dialogues* were well worth study, quite apart from questions of miracle.

Such was the editorial introduction of the Benedictines.

Reference has been made to the Greek version of the *Dialogues* which the Benedictines print in parallel columns with the Latin.

The version was produced under the influence of Pope Zacharias, a Greek who held the bishopric of Rome for ten years, 741-751. He was the friend of our great fellow-countryman Boniface the apostle of Germany, Archbishop of Mainz.

The Church of Rome was in the beginning a Greek-speaking Church. When it came to be Latin-speaking, the New Testament and the Church services were translated into the language understood of the people, an excellent example which we followed some four hundred years ago. The Roman Empire had its western and its eastern sides, and there was natural interlinking in various directions. The Roman people had to wait till the Greek-speaking emperor was pleased to allow the man of their choice to become bishop of Rome. The ratification of his election had to be requested in very submissive terms, both of the emperor and of his deputy, the exarch at Ravenna. When the

Mohammedan conquests of the seventh century threatened Constantinople, and had come so near that the Mohammedan tents covered the east side of the Bosphorus, many of the learned Greeks fled from Constantinople and sought refuge in Rome. In such numbers did they come, and of such importance were they, that the twelfth bishop of Rome after Vitalian, who sent the Greek Theodore to be our archbishop, was the seventh Greek refugee in succession who had been made bishop of Rome. Muratori believed that the influence of the exarchs and other imperial officials caused the election to fall on persons of their own nation. These Greeks, he held, did no injury to the Roman See, for they maintained the true faith of the Church, and were not driven out of the right way by the threats of the Greek emperors. Gregory III, the predecessor of Zacharias, was a Syrian by birth. Zacharias was a Greek. He was a man of large policy. At his election the appeal to the exarch for recognition was abandoned, for ever. He desired that so popular a book as the *Dialogues* should be rendered accessible to Greeks under his rule as well as to the Latins. Hence the Greek version, which differs, the editors say, from the authentic Latin in headings and in arguments and in many other ways. It is of the highest interest in details which are beyond the scope of our present inquiry, swarming with material for the Greco-barbarian glossary. It may be remembered that even so far as the Latin itself is concerned, Gregory says distinctly in his preface to the *Moralia* that he does not avoid barbarisms. The important official named in Latin *defensor* is named in the Greek version of the *Dialogues* *δεφένωρ*. Latin titles of officials have been a difficulty for more than one translator. King Alfred read in *Orosius* that the *censores* had ordered a theatre to be built for acting plays. His Anglo-Saxon version of *Orosius* informs us that the *gods* of the Romans had ordered the Senate to build the play-house.

The historian Gibbon deals trenchantly with this part of the work and writings of the great Gregory: "The credulity or the prudence of Gregory was always disposed to confirm the truths of religion by the evidence of ghosts, miracles, and resurrections; and posterity has paid to his memory the same tribute which he freely granted to the virtue of his own or the preceding generation. The celestial honours have been liberally bestowed by the authority of

the popes ; but Gregory is the last of their own order whom they have presumed to inscribe in the calendar of saints." In the *variorum* notes to Gibbon's History, a French critic is said to have "vindicated the right of Gregory to the entire nonsense of the *Dialogues*," and Dupin's opinion is quoted, that he "does not think any one would vouch for the truth of all these miracles."

The Venerable Bede evidently loved to dwell in thought upon the relations between Gregory and his deacon Peter. Book II of his *Ecclesiastical History* opens with an account of the life and writings of Gregory. Writing of the great and various labours and anxieties of his life and high office, he remarks (c. 1) that once, in a private conversation with his deacon Peter, he spoke sorrowfully of the effect of these manifold labours upon his soul, the former virtues of which he had enumerated :

"Now," Bede quotes, "on account of the pastoral charge, my soul is entangled with the affairs of laymen, and after so fair an appearance of inward peace, it is defiled with the dust of earthly action. Having wasted itself on outward things by turning aside to the affairs of many men, even when it desires the inward things it returns to them undoubtedly impaired. I therefore consider what I endure and what I have lost ; and when I behold what I have thrown away, that which I endure appears the more grievous."

Of the *Dialogues* Bede says (ii. 1) that Gregory composed four books of *Dialogues* in which he recounted the virtues of the more renowned saints of Italy, whom he had either known or heard of, as a pattern of life for posterity ; to the end that, as he taught in his books of expositions what virtues men ought to strive after, so, by describing the miracles of saints, he might make known the glory of those virtues.

We can date the composition of the *Dialogues* fairly well. In a letter of Gregory's, written in the summer of 593, he tells his correspondent that he has been urged by his own domestic circle to write something of the miracles wrought by Italian Fathers, and he vehemently begs that any known miracles may be briefly reported to him. Dr. Dudden¹ quotes passages from the *Dialogues* which show that the

¹ *Gregory the Great, His Place in History and Thought*. 2 vols. Longmans, Green and Co., 1905. A very valuable book.

end of 593 or the early part of 594 saw the publication of the book.

The dialogue was a favourite form for books written in those early times for instruction or general interest. The form comes near to the vividness of a stage with two performers. As a narrative or an argument proceeds in a book, there is often a little difficulty in passing from one step or one scene to another. This difficulty the interlocutor can always get rid of. In many of the dialogues in Gregory's book, the deacon Peter merely sets him off on a fresh line or calls him back to explain something which would have made a long and dislocating parenthesis if he had interposed the explanation as a part of his statement.

Further, seeing the sort of remark that Peter makes, and his non-logical interpositions, we may take it that the Peter of the book does not represent in character or mind the favourite secretary of the Pope, but rather the stolid and rather stupid ordinary man of the time. Indeed, we may almost imagine that Gregory got a good deal of fun out of some of the things he makes Peter say, to the discomfiture of his secretary and the open amusement of other members of the innermost company of the Lateran.

Dr. Dudden has no doubt that to Gregory and others of his time these legends of miracles were a consolation and a hope. The stories of marvels wrought in their own country appealed to them almost as strongly as the assurances of the Bible. They seemed to show visibly the Divine Providence watching over the children of the true Faith, guiding and glorifying their lives on earth, and giving them sure prospects of the rewards of heaven. Hence we find that from the death of Gregory to the time of Charlemagne, the principal literary works which were written or read—at any rate in Italy and France—were narratives of the lives and miracles of saints. In hagiography the history, the theology, the poetry, the philosophy, the fiction, of the period are summed up.

It is possible, the same writer observes, that besides the general motive of providing some edifying and entertaining literature for his friends, Gregory had a more special reason for the compilation of the *Dialogues*. They were to serve not only as an illustration of God's power displayed for the consolation of His people, but also as a glorification of the Catholic Faith for the conviction of heretics and unbelievers,

the Arians and the pagans among the Lombards. All those who performed miracles were Catholics, not Arians, and many of the miracles were performed to frustrate the malice of Arians and idolaters. It is probable therefore that Gregory intended to show that God was on the side of the orthodox, notwithstanding the apparent successes of the heretical Lombards, and manifested His power only through the orthodox.

We may ask ourselves, with some wonder, if Gregory himself believed the stories of miracles which he relates; not that nearly all of the miraculous stories really approach to what is properly called a miracle. We have, curiously enough, an answer to this question, with regard to miracles in this land of ours. Bede tells us (*H. E. I. xxxi*) that Gregory sent to Augustine a letter concerning miracles wrought by Augustine, a copy of which Bede gives :

“ I know, most loving brother, that Almighty God shows through you great miracles in the nation which He has chosen. Wherefore it is necessary that you rejoice with fear and trembling in that gift from heaven. Rejoice that the minds of the English are drawn by outward miracle to inward grace; but fear lest amid the wonders the infirm mind be presumptuous, and by reason of empty glory suffer inward fall.”

This letter on miracles in England King Alfred omits in his Anglo-Saxon version of Bede's History; not for any special reason connected with the subject of the letter, but because he omits several of the letters of that early period of our Church history, some of them being among the most interesting of the period.

We may remember that Lanfranc examined the evidence for the miraculous power of the Saxon Aldhelm of Malmesbury, and was so well satisfied that he canonized him and made his feast a double. And when the Pope was asked to canonize King Edward the Confessor, the monks of Westminster had to draw up a *libellus* of his many manifestations of miraculous virtues, and the Pope was satisfied. The *libellus* is possibly in the papal archives still.

The *Dialogues* were very popular from the first, and late on into the Middle Ages. An Arabic version was made in 779, naturally from the Greek version (see p. 34), not from the Latin. An Old-French version, highly valued, was in the library of John Duke of Berri, the third son of King

John of France, about 1370. Wendelin Förster published at Halle in 1876 this very popular Old-French version, *Li Dialogue Gregoire lo Pape*. In 1876 Thorvaldur Bjarnson published an Old-Icelandic version. Th. Wright and J. Earle worked at the Anglo-Saxon version and issued specimens of it. As has already been stated, Hans Hecht published the full Anglo-Saxon text at Leipzig in 1900.

An English version of the *Dialogues of St. Gregory the Great*, translated from the Latin, was published in 1874 by Henry James Coleridge of the Society of Jesus (Burns and Oates). It was taken from a small duodecimo volume printed in the beginning of the seventeenth century. The dedication was to Anne of Denmark, queen of James I of England; it was dated January 1, 1608, and was signed P. W. It is evidently the work of an English Roman Catholic, desiring to interest the queen in favour of pre-Reformation opinions. The preface to the book is addressed to the "courteous and virtuous Christian reader, desirous of that knowledge which bringeth pleasure and leadeth to true religious piety and devotion." The original volume contained also some accounts of miracles from the *De Civitate Dei* of St. Augustine, and from Eusebius and other early Church historians and writers. The language is in parts curiously modern; but that is partly or principally due to the fact that our idea of the most effective English is taken from a work published at the same time, which we know and love as the *Authorized Version*. The editor assures us that in almost every case the language of the original volume is left untouched. The translation is very close to the Latin.

There was a certain fitness in dedicating the volume to Anne of Denmark. It is now understood that Anne had at least strong leaning towards the Roman Catholics, married as she was to the Reformer James I. Gregory's book was sent, we are told by his biographer Paul the Deacon, to the Catholic Lombard Queen Theodelinda, married to the Arian Agilulf, that the stories of miracles wrought by Christian saints might convert to the true faith both Arians and pagans. The coincidence is interesting.

CHAPTER II

Alfred's version prepared by Bishop Werferth—Alfred's own Preface—Gregory's own Preface, in Werferth's version, in the original Latin, and in Elizabethan English—Commencement of the dialogue between Gregory and Peter—Of the abbat Æquitius and a nun who ate a devil—Of the clerk Constantine who burned water in his lamps—Discussion thereon—Of a certain man named Martirius, who made a cross on a baking cake.

KING ALFRED employed Bishop Werferth of Worcester to translate into English these *Dialogues*, which attained such wide popularity throughout the Middle Ages. He himself wrote a short introduction, explanatory of his purpose, as follows :

‘I, Alfred, by the grace of Christ dignified with the honour of royalty, have distinctly understood and through the reading of holy books have often heard, that of us to whom God hath given so much eminence of worldly distinction, it is specially required that we from time to time should subdue and bend our minds to the divine and spiritual law, in the midst of this earthly misery. I accordingly sought and requested of my trusty friends that they for me out of pious books about the conversation and miracles of holy men would transcribe the instruction that hereinafter followeth ; that I, through this admonition and love being strengthened in my mind, may now and then contemplate the heavenly things in the midst of these earthly troubles. Plainly we can now first hear how the blessed and apostolic man Saint Gregory spake to his deacon whose name was Peter, about the manners and life of holy men for instruction and for example to all those who are working the will of God.’

The King then proceeds with Werferth's Anglo-Saxon translation of Gregory's own introduction to the book of *Dialogues*. This introduction is of very high interest, considering the position and character of the man, and his practised ability in business affairs, first as a great layman, then as an important abbat, and then as bishop of Rome. In order that we may have some test of the relative merits

of Alfred and of the early seventeenth-century translator, it will be well to give the earlier part of Gregory's introduction, first in Professor Earle's translation from the Anglo-Saxon, and next in the original Latin, and then to give the whole in the seventeenth-century rendering.

First, then, Werferth :

On a certain day it happened that I was very much harassed with the contentions and worries of certain secular cares, in the discharge of this episcopal function. In secular offices we are very often compelled to do the things that we well enough know we ought not to do. Then my desire turned to that retired place where I formerly was in the monastery. That is the friend of sorrow, because a man can always best think over his grief and his wrong if he is alone in retirement. There everything plainly showed itself to me, whatever disquieted me about my own occupation ; and there before the eyes of my heart distinctly came all the practical wrongs which were wont to bring upon me grief and sorrow. Accordingly, while I was there sitting in great oppression and long silence, there came to me my beloved son Peter the deacon, who from his early youth with friendly love was intimately attached and bound to me ; and he was ever my companion in the study of sacred lore. And he then looking on me saw that I was oppressed with the heavy grief of my heart, and he thus said to me, " Ah, sire, hath anything new happened to thee, by reason of which thou hast more grief than was formerly thy wont ? " Then said I to him, " Alas, Peter, the grief which I daily endure it is to me always old for use and wont ; and it is to me always new through the increase of it."

The Latin runs thus : *Quadam die nimis quorundam secularium tumultibus depressus, quibus in suis negotiis plerumque cogimur solvere etiam quod nos certum est non debere, secretum locum petii amicis mœroris, ubi omne quod de mea mihi occupatione displicebat, se patenter ostenderet, et cuncta quæ infligere dolorem consueverant, congesta ante oculos licenter venirent. Ibi itaque cum afflictus valde et diu tacitus sederem, dilectissimus filius meus Petrus diaconus adfuit, mihi a primævo juventutis flore amicitias familiariter obstrictus, atque ad sacri verbi indagationem socius. Qui gravi excoqui cordis languore me intuens, ait : Num quidnam tibi aliquid accidit, quod plus te solito mœror*

tenet ? Cui inquam : Mæror, Petre, quem quotidie patior, et semper mihi per usum vetus est, et semper per augmentum novus.

That is rather pretty Latin, and Alfred's version of it does it fair justice. We may now let the version made for Anne of Denmark give us the whole of Gregory's introduction.

Being upon a certain day too much overcharged with the troubles of worldly business, in which oftentimes men are enforced to do more than of duty they are bound, I retired myself into a solitary place, very fit for a sad and melancholy disposition, where each discontentment and dislike concerning such secular affairs might plainly show themselves, and all things that usually bring grief, mustered together, might freely be presented before mine eyes. In which place, after that I had sat a long while in much silence and great sorrow of soul, at length Peter, my dear son and deacon, came unto me—a man whom from his younger years I had always loved most entirely, and used him for my companion in the study of Sacred Scripture : who, seeing me drowned in such a depth of sorrow, spake unto me in this manner :

“What is the matter ? or what bad news have you heard ? for, certain I am, that some extraordinary sadness doth now afflict your mind.” To whom I returned this answer : “O Peter, the grief which I continually endure is unto me both old and new : old through common use, and new by daily increasing. For mine unhappy soul, wounded with worldly business, doth now call to mind in what state it was when I lived in my own abbey, and how then it was superior to all earthly matters, far above all transitory and corruptible pelf, how it did usually think upon nothing but heavenly things ; and though it was enclosed in mortal body, yet did it by contemplation pass far beyond earthly bounds, and penetrate to the height of Heaven ; and as for death, the memory whereof is almost to all men grievous, that it did love and desire as the end of all misery, the reward of its labours, and the very entrance to an everlasting and blessed life. But now, by reason of my pastoral charge, my poor soul is enforced to endure the burden of secular men's business, and after so excellent and sweet a kind of rest,

defiled it is with the dust of worldly conversation : and when it doth, at the request of others, attend to outward affairs, no question but it returneth back far less fit to think upon those that be inward, spiritual, and heavenly. Wherefore at this present do I meditate what I suffer, and consider what my soul hath lost : and the memory of my former loss doth make that more grievous which I do now endure. For do you not behold at this present how I am tossed with the waves of this wicked world, and see the ship of my soul beaten with the storms of a terrible tempest ? And therefore, when I remember my former state of life, I cannot but sigh to look back, and cast mine eyes upon the forsaken shore.

“ And that which doth yet grieve me more, is because I see myself so carried away amain with the boisterous blasts of this troublesome world, that I can now but scarce behold the port from whence I did first hoist sail ; for such be the downfall of our soul, that first it loseth that goodness and virtue which before it possessed ; yet so that it doth still remember what it hath lost ; but afterwards, carried away more and more, and straying further from the path of virtue, it cometh at length to that pass, that it doth not so much as keep in mind what before it did daily practise ; and so, in conclusion, it falleth out as I said before, that sailing further on we go at length so far, that we do not so much as once behold the sweet harbour of quiet and peace from whence we first set forth. Sometimes also my sorrow is increased by remembering the lives of certain notable men who with their whole soul did utterly forsake and abandon this wicked world ; whose high perfection when I behold, I cannot also but see mine own infirmities and imperfections ; very many of whom did, in a contemplative and retired kind of life, much please God ; and lest by dealing with transitory business they might have decayed in virtue, God’s goodness vouchsafed to free them from the troubles and affairs of this wicked world.

“ But that I have now said will be far more plain and the better perceived, if the residue of my speech be dialogue-wise, setting down each of our names, you asking what you shall think convenient, and I by answer giving satisfaction to such questions as you shall demand at my hands.”

PETER. I do not remember any in Italy that have been very famous for virtue ; and therefore I am ignorant who

they be, that, comparing their life to yours, you should be so much inflamed to imitate their steps. For although I make no doubt that there have been many good men, yet do I verily think that none of them wrought any miracles, or at least they have been hitherto so buried in silence, that, whether any such thing hath been done or no, not any one man can tell.

GREGORY. If I should, Peter, but report only those things which myself alone have understood by the relation of virtuous and credible persons, or else learned by myself concerning the life and miracles of perfect and holy men, I should sooner, in mine opinion, lack day to talk in than matter to speak of.

PETER. I am desirous that you would vouchsafe to make me partaker of some of them : and not to think much if, on so good an occasion, you interrupt your other study of interpreting the Scripture : because no less edification doth grow by the relating of miracles. For as, by the exposition of that, we learn how virtue is to be found and kept ; so by recounting the miracles of holy men, we know how that which is found out and possessed is declared and made manifest to the world. And some there are that be sooner moved to the love of God by virtuous examples than by godly sermons ; and oftentimes by the lives of the holy fathers the heart doth reap a double commodity ; for if, by comparing of his own life with theirs he findeth himself inflamed with the love of Heaven, although before he had haply a good opinion of himself, yet seeing now how far others do excel him, he becometh also more humble, and is brought to have a more lowly conceit of his own actions and virtue.

GREGORY. Such things as venerable and holy men have told me, I will now, without any further delay, make you partaker of, and that, following the example of Sacred Scripture : for sure I am that St. Luke and St. Mark learned that gospel which they wrote, not by sight, but by the relation of others. Yet lest any in reading should have occasion to doubt whether such things as I write be true or no, I will set down by what means and of whom I have learned them : yet in some of them you have to know that I remember not all the particulars, but only the matter : in other some, both the matter and also the words. Besides, if I should have been so curious as to have kept in mind each man's particular words, many, uttered after the country manner, would have made the style of my discourse nothing handsome nor seemly.

That story which I mean first to begin with, I had by the report of passing reverend men and of great years.

It may fairly be remarked, with all our reverence for the holy Gregory, that we in our time would gladly part with a considerable percentage of his stories in exchange for a few sentences of Latin "after the country manner." Gregory, as we have seen, stated in the preface to his *Moralia* that he had not been careful to avoid barbarisms.

Book I of the *Dialogues* contains a disconnected collection of "virtues" made manifest in the lives of saints. We must make a selection of persons for our present purpose. They shall be the abbat Æquitius, the clerk Constantius, a certain man Martirius, and a man of rare life called Severus.

Of Æquitius, abbat in the Province of Valeria, as related by Fortunatus, abbat of the monastery called Cicero's Bath

i. 4

Among many examples of miraculous power, it is recorded that upon a certain day one of the nuns of the monastery, going into the garden, saw a lettuce that liked her, and forgetting to bless it before with the sign of the cross greedily did she eat it. Whereupon she was suddenly possessed with the devil, fell down to the ground, and was painfully tormented. Word in all haste was carried to Æquitius, desiring him quickly to visit the afflicted woman and to help her with his prayers. So soon as he came into the garden, the devil that was entered into her began, by her tongue as it were, to excuse himself, saying, What have I done? What have I done? I was sitting there upon the lettuce, and she came and did eat me. But the man of God in great zeal commanded him to depart, and not to tarry longer in the servant of Almighty God, and the devil straightway went out, not presuming any more to touch her.

PETER. Desirous I am to know what manner of life he led who is said to have received such gifts at God's hands.

GREGORY. The work, Peter, proceedeth of the gift, and not the gift from the work, otherwise grace were not grace. God's gifts do go before all works of ours, although the gifts by the works which follow do increase. Such a zeal to save souls had inflamed his heart, that albeit he had the charge

of many monasteries, yet did he diligently travel up and down, and visit churches, towns, villages, and particular men's houses, and all this to stir up the hearts of his hearers to the love of heavenly joys. The apparel which he wore was so base and contemptible that such as knew him not would have thought scorn so much as to have saluted him, though himself had first offered that courtesy. And whithersoever he went, his manner was to ride, but that upon the most forlorn beast which could be found : his bridle was but an halter, his saddle no better than plain sheep's skins. His books of divinity were put into leathern bags, and those he did carry himself, some hanging on the right side of his horse, and some upon the left.

Of the clerk Constantius

i. 5

GREGORY. Near unto the city of Ancona there is a church of the blessed martyr St. Stephen, in which one called Constantius, a man of venerable life, did serve as clerk, who for his virtue and holiness was famous far and near, being one that utterly despised all worldly things, and with the whole power of his soul thirsted after the joys of heaven.

Upon a certain day it so fell out that there was no oil in the church, by reason of which the aforesaid servant of God had not wherewith to light the lamps. Thereupon he filled them all with water, and as the manner is put a piece of paper in the midst of each and then set the paper on fire ; and the water did so burn in the lamps as though it had been very oil. By which you may gather, Peter, of what merit this man was, who, enforced by necessity, did change the nature of the element.

PETER. Very strange it is that you say. But desirous I am to know what humility he had inwardly in his soul, who outwardly was so wonderful in the eyes of the world.

GREGORY. Among miracles, very fitly do you inquire the inward state of the mind, for it is almost incredible how miracles wrought in the sight of men do with their temptation inward assault the soul. But when you have heard one thing which this venerable Constantius did, you will quickly perceive what an humble man he was.

PETER. You have told me one of his miracles. It remaineth that you do edify me with the humility of his soul.

GREGORY. Because the report of his holy life was very much spread abroad, many from divers countries travelled to Ancona, being very desirous to see him. Amongst others a certain country fellow was come from far off, for that purpose. At which time it so chanced that the holy man was standing upon a pair of wooden stairs busying himself in mending the lamps. A very little person he was of stature, with a thin face, and to the outward view contemptible. The fellow who had come to see him inquired earnestly which was the man for whose sake he had come so long a journey. Those that knew him forthwith told him, pointing to Constantius. But as foolish men do measure the merits of men by the quality of their bodies, so he, beholding him so little and contemptible, by no means could be persuaded that they told him truth. For in the country fellow's mind there fell out, as it were, a great dispute betwixt that which he had heard and that which he saw; and he verily persuaded himself that the man could not be so little in his eyes who was so great, and therefore, when very many did constantly affirm that he was the man, the simple soul despised him, and in a scoffing manner said: "I verily believed that he had been a goodly great man; but this fellow hath not anything at all in him that is like a man." These words of his the servant of God, Constantius, hearing, forthwith left his lamps which he was in hand with, and in great haste came merrily down the stairs, embraced the country clown, and of exceeding love held him fast in his arms, kissed him, gave him great thanks for his having that opinion, and spake thus unto him: "Thou only," quoth he, "hast thine eyes open and dost truly behold what I am." By which fact we may easily gather what an humble man he was that loved the country fellow the more for contemning him: for injurious words and contumelious usage try what a man is inwardly in his soul. For as proud men are glad of honour, so those that be humble for the most part rejoice in contempt and disgrace; and when they behold themselves to be of no account in the opinion of others glad they are, because they see that to be confirmed by the judgment of others which inwardly in their own souls they had of themselves.

PETER. This man, as I perceive, was outwardly great in miracles, but yet greater by his inward humility of soul.

Of a certain man named Martirius

i. 11

GREGORY. A certain man lived in the province of Valeria, named Matirius, who was a very devout servant of Almighty God and gave this testimony of his virtuous life. Upon a certain day, the other monks, his brethren, made a hearth-cake, forgetting to make upon it the sign of the cross : for in that country they used to make a cross upon their cakes, dividing them so into four parts. When the servant of God came they told him that it was not marked ; who, seeing it covered with ashes and coals, asked why they did not sign it ; and speaking so, he made the sign of the cross with his hand against the coals : which thing while he was doing, the cake gave a great crack, as though the pan had been broken with the fire. After it was baked, and taken out, they found it marked with the sign of the cross, which yet not any corporal touching, but the faith of Martirius had imprinted.

CHAPTER III

Of a parish priest, Severus, who went on pruning his vines while a parishioner died, but rescued him from the evil spirits—Discussion thereon—The Second Book of the *Dialogues* begins. It is entirely on the marvels of the holy Benedict—List of ten of his miracles, from "How he made a broken sieve whole" to "How a loaf was poisoned and carried off by a crow"—How he revived a boy crushed to death—Another raising of the dead—Of monks that ate outside the monastery—Of a monk who hid a flask of wine—The plans for a new abbey given by vision—Discussion thereon—Of nuns absolved after death—Discussion thereon.

Of a certain parish priest called Severus

i. 12

GREGORY. In the same country of Valeria there is a valley which is called of the plain people Interocrina, in which there lived a certain man of rare life called Severus, who was a parish priest of the church of Our Blessed Lady the Mother of God and perpetual Virgin. One that lay at the point of death sent for him in great haste, desiring him to come with all speed and by his prayers to make intercession for him, that doing penance for his wickedness, and loosed from his sins, he might depart this life. It so chanced that the priest at that time was busy in the pruning of his vines, and therefore he bade them that came for him to go on before, "and," quoth he, "I will come after by and by"; for seeing he had but little to do, he stayed a pretty while to make an end of that. When it was dispatched, he went to visit the sick man. But as he was going the former messengers met with him, saying: "Father, why have you stayed so long? go not now any further, for the man is dead." At which news the good man fell a-trembling, and cried out aloud that he had killed him. Thereupon he fell a-weeping, and in that manner came unto the dead corpse, where before the bed he fell prostrate upon the earth, pouring out of tears. Lying there weeping very pitifully, beating his head against the ground, and crying out that he was guilty of his death, suddenly the dead man returned to life; which many that were present beholding cried out, and began

to weep more plentifully for joy, demanding of him where he had been, and by what means he came back again. To whom he said: "Certain cruel men," quoth he, "did carry me away, out of whose mouth and nostrils fire came forth which I could not endure. And as they were leading me through dark places, suddenly a beautiful young man with others met us, who said unto them that were drawing me forward: "Carry him back again; for Severus the priest lamenteth his death, and Our Lord, for his tears, hath given him longer life." Then Severus rose up from the earth, and by his intercession did assist him in doing of penance. And when the sick man that had revived had done penance for his sins by the space of seven days, upon the eighth day with a cheerful countenance he departed this life.

Consider, Peter, I pray you, how dearly Our Lord loved this Severus, that would not suffer him to be grieved but for a little time.

PETER. They be marvellous strange things that you repeat, which before this time I never heard of. But what is the reason that in these days there be not any such men now living?

GREGORY. I make no doubt, Peter, but that there be many such holy men now living. For though they work not the like miracles, yet for all that may they be as virtuous and as holy, for true judgment of a man's life is to be taken from his virtuous conversation and not from the working of miracles; for many there be who although they do not such strange things, yet are they not inferior in virtue to them that do them.

PETER. How, I beseech you, can it be maintained for true that there be some that work not any miracles, and yet be as virtuous as they which work them?

GREGORY. Sure I am that you know very well that the Apostle St. Paul is brother to St. Peter, chief of the Apostles in apostolic principality.

PETER. I know that indeed, for no doubt can be made thereof, for though he were the least of the Apostles, yet did he labour more than all they.

GREGORY. Peter, as you will remember, walked with his feet upon the sea. Paul in the sea suffered shipwreck. In one and the same element, where Paul could not pass with a ship, Peter went upon his feet. By which apparent it is;

that though their virtue in working miracles was not alike, yet their merit is alike in the Kingdom of Heaven.

PETER. I confess that I am well pleased with what you say, for I know most assuredly that the life and not the miracles is to be considered. But yet, seeing such miracles as he wrought do give testimony of a good life, I beseech you, if any more be yet remaining, that you would with the examples of holy men feed my hungry soul.

GREGORY. Desirous I am, to the honour of our Blessed Saviour, to tell you some things now concerning the miracles of the man of God, venerable St. Benedict. But to do it as it ought to be done this day is not sufficient, wherefore we will here make a pause, and to handle this matter more plentifully, take another beginning.

And so ends Book I of the *Dialogues*.

The Second Book of the *Dialogues* is concerned entirely with the acts and powers of the great St. Benedict.

The miracles recorded of the holy Benedict for the most part were far from striking in themselves, and their purpose was often small. The first on the record is "How Bennet made a broken sieve whole and sound." Then follows "How he overcame a great temptation of the flesh"; "How Bennet, by the sign of the holy Cross, brake a drinking-glass in pieces"; "How Bennet reformed a monk that would not stay at his prayers"; "Of a fountain that sprang forth at the top of a mountain, by the prayers of the man of God?"; "How the iron head of a bill from the bottom of the water returned to the handle again"; "How Maurus walked upon the water"; "How a loaf was poisoned, and carried off by a crow"; "How Venerable Bennet, by his prayer, removed an huge stone"; "Of the fantastical fire which burned in the kitchen." Those are the first ten of the thirty-eight recorded. The eleventh is "How Venerable Bennet revived a boy crushed to death with the ruin of a wall." This is more serious. The story is divided into two parts, "The devil kills a boy," "Bennet restores him to life." The devil appeared in an insulting manner to the man of God as he was in his cell at his prayers, and told him he was going to his monks, who were a-working, heightening a wall. Bennet sent a warning, but it came too late. The wall fell and broke a boy so completely that they could only carry the remains in a sack, because—so the cause is stated—the

stones had broken not only his limbs, but also his very bones. Bennet made him sound, and as lively as ever he was before, and sent him again to his former work, that he also might help the monks to make an end of that wall, of whose death the old serpent thought he should have exulted over Bennet and greatly triumphed.

There is only one other miracle of raising one said to be dead. A countryman carried the corpse of his dead son to Bennet, who lay upon the little child and prayed, and the body was seen to pant and shake, and came to life.

The Romanist editor suggests that with regard to "this famous book of one of the most famous of the Popes, modern thinkers will probably be uncertain whether to marvel most that St. Gregory should have written it, or that it should have had so much influence in the conversion of the Lombards and over the minds of Christians of subsequent generations. And yet"—he adds—"we think it is but the shallowest criticism that can depreciate such a volume."

How by revelation Venerable Bennet knew that his monks had eaten outside the monastery

ii. 12

GREGORY. Among other miracles which the man of God did, he began also to be famous for the spirit of prophecy : as to foretell what was to happen, and to relate unto them that were present such things as were done in absence. The order of his abbey was, when any of the monks went abroad (to deliver any message) never to eat or drink anything out of their cloister : and this being diligently observed, according to the prescription of their rule, upon a certain day, some of the monks went forth upon such business : and being enforced about the dispatch thereof to tarry somewhat long abroad, it so fell out that they stayed at the house of a religious woman, where they did eat and refresh themselves. And being late before they came back to the abbey, they went, as the manner was, and asked their father's blessing : of whom he demanded where they had eaten, and they said, "Nowhere." "Why do you," quoth he, "tell an untruth ? for did you not go into such a woman's house, and eat such and such kind of meat, and drink so many cups ?" When they heard him recount so in particular, both where they

had stayed, what kind of meat they had eaten, and how often they had drunk; and perceived that he knew well all whatsoever they had done, they fell down trembling at his feet, and confessed that they had done wickedly: who straightway pardoned them for that fault, persuading himself that they would not any more in his absence presume to do any such thing, seeing they now perceived that he was with them in spirit.

How blessed Bennet knew the hiding away of a flagon of wine

ii. 18

GREGORY. Upon a certain time, Exhilaratus, our monk, a lay brother, whom you know, was sent by his master to the monastery of the man of God, to carry him two wooden bottles, commonly called flagons,¹ full of wine: who in the way, as he was going, hid one of them in a bush for himself, and presented the other to venerable Bennet, who took it very thankfully: and when the man was going away, he gave him this warning: "Take heed, my son," quoth he, "that thou drinkest not of that flagon which thou hast hidden in the bush; but first be careful to bow² it down, and thou shalt find what is within it." The poor man, thus pitifully confounded by the man of God, went his way, and coming back to the place where the flagon was hidden, and desirous to try the truth of that was told him, as he was bowing² it down, a snake straightway leaped forth. Then Exhilaratus perceiving what was gotten into the wine, began to be afraid of that wickedness which he had committed.

How, by vision, Venerable Bennet disposed the building of the Abbey of Terracina

ii. 22

GREGORY. At another time he was desired by a certain virtuous man to build an abbey for his monks upon his ground, not far from the city of Terracina. The holy man was content, and appointed an abbat and prior, with divers monks under them, and when they were departing, he promised that upon such a day he would come, and show them

¹ Flascones, φλασχία.

² This is the literal meaning of our word *decant*, to give the vessel a cant to one side.

in what place the oratory should be made, and where the refectory should stand, and all the other necessary rooms : and so they, taking his blessing, went their way ; and against the day appointed, which they greatly expected, they made all such things ready as were necessary to entertain him, and those that should come in his company. But the very night before, the man of God in sleep appeared to the abbat and the prior, and particularly described unto them where each place and office was to be builded. And when they were both risen, they conferred together what either of them had seen in their sleep : but yet not giving full credit to that vision, they expected the man of God himself in person, according to his promise. But when they saw that he came not, they returned back unto him very sorrowfully, saying : " We expected, father, that you should have come according to promise, and told us where each place should have been built, which yet you did not." To whom he answered : " Why say you so, good brethren ? Did not I come, as I promised you ? " And when they asked at what time it was : " Why, quoth he, did not I appear to either¹ of you in your sleep, and appoint you how and where every place was to be builded ? Go your way, and according to that plan which you then saw, build up the abbey." At which words they much marvelled, and returning back they caused it to be builded in such sort as they had been taught of him by revelation.

PETER. Gladly would I learn by what means that could be done : to wit, that he should go so far to tell them that thing in their sleep, which they should both hear and know by vision.

GREGORY. Why do you, Peter, seek out, and doubt in what manner this thing was done ? For certain it is that the soul is of a more noble nature than the body. And by authority of Scripture we know that the prophet Habacuc was carried from Judæa with that dinner which he had, and was suddenly set in Chaldea² ; by which meat the prophet Daniel was relieved : and presently afterward was brought back again to Judæa. If then Habacuc could in a moment, with his body, go so far, and carry provision for another man's dinner ; what marvel is it if the holy father, Bennet, obtained grace to go in spirit, and to inform the souls of his brethren, that were asleep, concerning such things as were

¹ *Utrisque vobis.*

² *Dan. xiv. 33.*

necessary : and that as Habacuc about corporal meat went corporally, so Bennet should go spiritually about the dispatch of spiritual business ?

PETER. I confess that your words have satisfied my doubtful mind. But I would know what manner of man he was in his ordinary talk and conversation.

Of certain nuns absolved after their death

ii. 23

GREGORY [of St. Benedict]. His common talk, Peter, was usually full of virtue ; for his heart conversed so above in Heaven, that no words could in vain proceed from his mouth. And if at any time he spake aught, yet not as one who determined what was best to be done, but only in a threatening manner, his speech in that case was effectual and forcible, as though he had not doubtfully or uncertainly but assuredly pronounced and given sentence. For not far from his abbey there lived two nuns in a place by themselves, both of worshipful parentage, whom a religious good man did serve for the dispatch of their outward business. But as nobility of family doth in some breed ignobility of mind, and maketh them in conversation to show less humility, because they remember still what superiority they had above others ; even so it was with these nuns : for they had not yet learned to temper their tongues, and keep them under with the bridle of their habit ; for often did they, by their indiscreet speech, provoke the aforesaid religious man to anger ; who having borne with them a long time, at length he complained to the man of God, and told him with what reproachful words they entreated him : whereupon he sent them by and by this message, saying, " Amend your tongues, otherwise I do excommunicate you " : which sentence of excommunication notwithstanding he did not then presently pronounce against them, but only threatened if they amended not themselves. But they, for all this, changed their conditions nothing at all : both which not long after departed this life, and were buried in the church ; and when solemn Mass was celebrated in the same church, and the deacon according to custom said with a loud voice : " If any there be that do not communicate, let him depart," the nurse, which used to give unto Our Lord an offering for them, beheld them at that time to rise out of their graves, and to depart the church.

Having oftentimes, at those words of the deacon, seen them leave the church, and that they could not tarry within, she remembered what message the man of God sent them while they were yet alive. For he told them that he did deprive them of the communion, unless they did amend their tongues and conditions. Then, with great sorrow the whole matter was signified to the man of God, who straightway with his own hands gave an oblation, saying: "Go your ways and cause this to be offered unto Our Lord for them, and they shall not remain any longer excommunicate": which oblation being offered for them, and the deacon, as he used, crying out that such as did not communicate should depart, they were not seen any more to go out of the church: whereby it was certain, that seeing they did not depart with them which did not communicate, they had received the communion of Our Lord by the hands of His servant.

PETER. It is very strange that you report: for how could he, though a venerable and most holy man, yet being in mortal body, loose those souls which stood now before the invisible judgment of God?

GREGORY. Was he not yet, Peter, mortal, that heard from Our Saviour: "Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth it shall be bound also in the heavens: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in the heavens?" Whose place of binding and loosing those have at this time, which by faith and virtuous life possess the place of holy government: and to bestow such power upon earthly men the Creator of Heaven and earth descended from Heaven to earth: and that flesh might judge of spiritual things, God vouchsafed to grant this, that God became flesh for men: for our weakness thus rose above itself, as God's strength descended below itself.

PETER. For the virtue of his miracles your words do yield a very good reason.

CHAPTER IV

Of the visit of a certain deacon named Servandus to Benedict ; Gregory's Latin, Professor Earle's translation of Alfred's version, and the translation for Anne of Denmark—Discussion thereon—Silence advised, to repair their powers of talking—Book II ends—Paulinus of Nola—Of John, bishop of Rome, and a lady's horse he had ridden—A miracle of Agapetus, pontifex.

BESIDES recording the virtues of the blessed Benedict, Gregory's Second Book contains a remarkable chapter on a vision by him which brings in one Servandus, a frequent visitor and an intimate friend of Benedict. As this led to a curious discussion between Gregory and Peter, it may be well once more to compare the Latin account, and the Anglo-Saxon rendering, and the seventeenth-century translation. The original Latin is as follows :

Of a certain deacon named Servandus

ii. 35

GREGORY. Alio quoque tempore Servandus diaconus, atque abbas ejus monasterii quod in Campaniæ partibus a Liberio quondam patricio (πατρικιόν) fuerat constructum, ad eum visitationis gratia ex more convenerat. Ejus quippe monasterium frequentabat ; ut quia idem quoque vir doctrina gratiæ cœlestis influebat, dulcia sibi invicem vitæ verba transfunderent, et suavem cibum cœlestis patriæ, quia adhuc perfecte gaudento non poterant, saltem suspirando gustarent. Cumque hora jam quietis exigeret : in cujus turris superioribus se venerabilis Benedictus, in ejus quoque inferioribus se Servandus diaconus collocavit : quo videlicet in loco inferiora superioribus pervius continuabat ascensus. Ante eamdem vero turrim largius erat habitaculum in quo utriusque discipuli quiescebant. Cumque vir Dei Benedictus quiescentibus adhuc Fratribus instans vigiliis, nocturnæ orationis tempora prævenisset, ad fenestram stans, et omnipotentem Deum deprecans, subito intempesta noctis hora respiciens, vidit fusam lucem desuper cunctas noctis tenebras effugasse,

tantoque splendore clarescere, ut diem vinceret lux illa quæ inter tenebras radiasset. Mira autem res valde in hac speculatione secuta est : quia, sicut post ipse narravit, omnis etiam mundus velut sub uno solis radio collectus, ante oculos ejus adductus est. Qui venerabilis Pater, dum intentam oculorum aciem in hoc splendore coruscæ lucis infigeret, vidit Germani Capuani Episcopi animam in sphæra ignea ab angelis in cælum ferri. Tunc tanti sibi testem volens adhibere miraculi, Servandum diaconum iterato bis terque ejus nomine, cum clamoris magnitudine vocavit. Cumque ille fuisset insolito tanti viri clamore turbatus, ascendit, respexit, partemque jam lucis exiguam vidit. Cui tantum hoc obstupescenti miraculum, vir Dei per ordinem quæ fuerant gesta narravit, statimque in Cassinum castrum religioso viro Theoprobo mandavit, ut ad Capuanam urbem sub eadem nocte transmitteret, et quid de Germano Episcopo ageretur, agnosceret et indicaret. Factumque est, et reverentissimum virum Germanum Episcopum, is qui missus fuerat jam defunctum reperit, et requirens subtiliter agnovit eodem momento fuisse illius obitum, quo vir Domini ejus cognovit ascensum.

PETRUS. Mira res valde, et vehementer stupenda.

The discussion which resulted from this story will be found at p. 61.

Professor Earle translates Alfred thus :

The visit of the abbat Servandus to the holy Benedict

ii. 35

ALFRED. Also at another time it happened that there came to him for a visit Servandus, as his custom was, the deacon, and abbat [abbod] of the monastery that Liberius the patrician had formerly built in South Langbeard land. In fact, he used to visit Benedict's monastery [mynster] frequently, to the end that in each other's company they might be mutually refreshed with the sweet words of life and the delectable food of the heavenly country, which they could not as yet with perfect bliss enjoy, but at least they did in aspiration taste it, inasmuch as the said Servandus was likewise abounding in the love of heavenly grace.¹ When, however, at length the time was come for their rest and

¹ This last remark is placed higher up in the Latin, where it fits better. Its insertion at the end of the sentence looks like an afterthought.

repose, the venerable Benedict was lodged in the upper floor of a tower, and Servandus the deacon rested in the nether floor of the same tower; and there was in the same place a solid staircase with plain steps, from the nether floor to the upper floor. There was, moreover, in front of the same tower a spacious house,¹ in which slept the disciples of them both.

When now Benedict the man of God was keeping the time of his nightly prayer, during the brethren's rest, then stood he all vigilant at a window, praying to the Almighty Lord. And then, suddenly, in that time of the nocturnal stillness, as he looked out he saw a light sent from on high disperse all the darkness of the night, and shine with a brightness so great that the light which then gleamed in the midst of the darkness was brighter than the light of day.

Lo then, in this sight a very wonderful thing followed next, as he himself afterwards related, that even all the world, as if placed under one ray of the sun, was displayed before his eyes. When, now, the venerable father had fastened the intent observation of his eyes on the brightness of that shining light, then saw he angels conveying in a fiery group into heaven the soul of Germanus, who was bishop of the city Capua.

He desired, then, to secure to himself a witness of so great a wonder, and he called Servandus the deacon twice and thrice, and repeatedly he named his name with a loud exclamation. Servandus then was disturbed at the unusual outcry of the honoured man, and he mounted the stairs and looked as directed, and he saw verily a small portion of that light. And as the deacon was then amazed for so great a wonder, the man of God related to him in order the things that had there happened; and forthwith he sent orders to the faithful man Theoprobis in Casinum the chief house, that he in the selfsame night should send a man to the city of Capua, and should ascertain and report to him what had happened about Germanus the bishop. Then it came to pass that he who was thither sent found that the venerable man Germanus the bishop had indeed died; and he then, cautiously inquiring, discovered that his departure was at that very time that the man of God had witnessed his ascent to heaven.

¹ *Sum rum hus* in the Anglo-Saxon, which sounds American. The Latin is *largius*; the Greek is merely *οἶκημα ἕτερον*.

PETER. This is a very wonderful thing, and greatly to be marvelled at.

For the continuation of the discussion see p. 61.

The translation for Anne of Denmark is as follows :

ii. 35

At another time, Servandus the deacon, and abbot of that monastery which in times past was founded by the noble man Liberius in the country of Campania, used ordinarily to come and visit the man of God : and the reason why he came so often was because himself also was a man full of heavenly doctrine ; and so they two had often together spiritual conference, to the end that albeit they could not perfectly feed upon the celestial food of Heaven, yet, by means of such sweet discourses, they might at least, with longing and fervent desire taste of those joys and divine delights. When it was time to go to rest, the venerable father Bennet reposed himself in the top of a tower, at the foot whereof the deacon Servandus was lodged, so that one pair of stairs went to them both : before the tower there was a certain large room in which both their disciples did lie. The man of God, Bennet, being diligent in watching, rose up early, before the time of matins, his monks being yet at rest, and came to the window of his chamber, where he offered up his prayers to Almighty God. Standing there, all on a sudden, in the dead of the night, as he looked forth he saw a light which banished away the darkness of the night, and glittered with such brightness, that the light which did shine in the midst of darkness was far more clear than the light of the day. Upon this sight a marvellous strange thing followed, for, as he himself did afterward report, the whole world, gathered as it were together under one beam of the sun, was presented before his eyes, and whilst the venerable father stood attentively beholding the brightness of that glittering light, he saw the soul of Germanus, bishop of Capua, in a fiery globe to be carried up by angels into Heaven. Then, desirous to have some witness of this so notable a miracle, he called with a very loud voice Servandus the deacon, twice or thrice, by his name, who, troubled at such unusual crying out of the man of God, went up in all haste, and looking forth, saw not anything else but a little

remnant of the light, but wondering at so great a miracle, the man of God told him all in order what he had seen, and sending by and by to the town of Cassino, he commanded the religious man Theoprobos to dispatch one that night to the city of Capua, to learn what was become of Germanus their bishop ; which being done, the messenger found that reverend prelate departed this life ; and inquiring curiously the time, he understood that he died that very instant in which the man of God beheld him ascending up to Heaven.

PETER. A strange thing, and very much to be admired. But whereas you say that the whole world, as it were under one sunbeam, was presented before his eyes, as I must needs confess that in myself I never had experience of any such thing, so neither can I conceive by what means the whole world can be seen of any one man.

GREGORY. Assure yourself, Peter, of that which I speak, to wit, that all creatures be, as it were, nothing, to that soul which beholdeth the Creator : for though it see but a glimpse of that light which is in the Creator, yet very small do all things seem which be created : for by the means of that supernatural light the capacity of the inward soul is enlarged, and is in God so extended that it is far above the world : yea and the soul that seeth in this manner is also above itself ; for being rapt up in the light of God, it is inwardly in itself enlarged above itself ; and when it is so exalted, and looketh downward, then doth it comprehend how little all that is which before in former baseness it could not comprehend.

The man of God, therefore, who saw the fiery globe, and the angels returning to Heaven, out of all doubt could not see those things but in the light of God : what marvel, then, is it, if he saw the world gathered together before him, who, rapt up in the light of his soul, was at that time out of the world. But albeit we say that the world was gathered together before his eyes, yet were not Heaven and earth drawn into any lesser room than they be of themselves, but the soul of the beholder was more enlarged, which, rapt in God, might without difficulty see that which is under God, and therefore in that light which appeared to his outward eyes, the inward light which was in his soul ravished the mind of the beholder to supernal things, and showed him how small all earthly things were.

PETER. I perceive now that it was to my more profit that I understood you not before : seeing by reason of my slow capacity, you have delivered so notable an exposition. But now, because you have made me so thoroughly to understand these things, I beseech you to continue on your former narration.

Having devoted the whole of his Second Book of *Dialogues* to the miracles of St. Benedict, Gregory suggests to Peter that if they are to deal with the miracles of other saints, they had better keep silence for a space, to repair their powers of talking. He then opens his Third Book with a long account of St. Paulinus of Nola, in which he makes the mistake referred to above (p. 34), naming the Wandals instead of the Goths as devastating Campania. He gave such an account of the saint that Peter said he was inclined to cry rather than to say anything. Gregory proceeded to tell of miracles connected with two of his predecessors, bishops of Rome.

Of the blessed man John, bishop of Rome

iii. 2

GREGORY. In the time of the Goths, when the most blessed man John, bishop [Pontifex] of this Church of Rome, travelled to the Emperor Justinian the elder, he came into the country of Corinth, where he lacked a horse to ride upon. A certain nobleman understanding this, lent him a horse which his wife used for her own saddle, because he was so very quiet. When he came to where he could get a suitable ¹ horse, he was to send the wife's horse back. The bishop rode him till he came to a place where he procured another, and he then returned the horse. And when the wife of the said nobleman would mount her horse again, she could not ; for the horse, having carried so great a pontiff, refused to carry a woman. He snorted so immensely, neighed, jumped about, to show that after the limbs of the pontiff he could not bear a woman. Her husband, sagely considering the matter, sent the horse back to the holy man, beseeching him to accept it, as he had by riding it consecrated it to his own use.

Of the same man another miracle has been handed down

¹ The careful Benedictines tell us that the MSS. differ here, some reading *altus*, others *aptus*.

to us. When he reached Constantinople, great crowds met him at the gate called Golden. In the presence of them all he restored eyesight to one who asked it of him ; he laid his hand on the eyes and drove away their blindness.

Another pope provides the next miracle, namely, Agapetus.

iii. 3

GREGORY. Not long after the miracles of John, the most blessed man Agapetus, pontifex of this holy Church of Rome, which by the dispensation of God I now serve, went to the Emperor Justinian on account of the Goths. While he was on his way and had reached the parts of Greece,¹ a dumb and lame man was brought to him to be cured. And when his neighbours in tears had brought him to the man of God, he inquired of them earnestly if they had faith in a cure. They declared that they had firm hope of his cure by the power of God on the authority of Peter. Forthwith the reverend man fell on prayer, and proceeding to the solemnity of Masses he immolated the sacrifice in the sight of God Omnipotent. This being accomplished, he left the altar, took the hand of the lame man, and with the people standing by and looking on, soon set him upright on his own feet.² Then he put the Lord's Body in his mouth, and the tongue that had so long been mute was set free for speech. All in astonishment began to weep for joy, and fear and veneration filled their minds when they saw what Agapetus had been able to do in the power of the Lord with the help of Peter.

On neither of these miracles of popes did Peter the deacon venture to make any remark. Indeed he seems to have taken so much to heart Gregory's suggestion of silence as a means of repairing the power of talking that he only makes one remark in the first thirteen chapters of this Third Book, and then only to say, "This history which I have heard worketh in me fear, and yet withal giveth me cause of hope." To which Gregory replies, "That is not amiss, Peter." The story had been a long and complicated one, with a more varied drama and *dramatis personæ* than usual, the pivot of the story being that a holy bishop once merrily smote a

¹ *Græclarum*.

² *in propriis gressibus erexit*. Queen Anne of Denmark appears to have been told, instead of this, that he restored him to the use of his eyes. There is no suggestion of this in the MSS. Alfred says *on his agene fet*.

nun on the back. When Peter does begin to talk again, it is evident that he has completely repaired his power of talking.

Two more stories will suffice for the Third Book.

Of a priest called Stephen, in the province of Valeria, whose stockings¹ the devil would have taken off

iii. 20

GREGORY. Some that are still living with me affirm this to be true which I will now speak of. A man of holy life there was called Stephen, who was a priest in the province of Valeria, nigh of kindred to my deacon Bonifacius; who, coming home upon a time from travel, spake somewhat negligently to his servant, saying: "Come, sir devil, and pull off my hose":² at which words, straightway his garters³ began to loose in great haste, so that he plainly perceived that the devil indeed, whom he named, was pulling off his stocking¹: whereat being much terrified, he cried out aloud, and said: "Away, wretched caitiff, away! I spake not to thee, but to my servant." Then the devil gave over, leaving his garters almost quite off. By which we may learn, that if the devil will be so officious in things concerning our body, how ready and diligent he is to observe and note the cogitations of our soul.

PETER. A very painful thing it is and terrible, always to strive against the temptations of the devil, and, as it were, to stand continually armed ready to fight.

GREGORY. Not painful at all, if we attribute our preservation not to ourselves, but to God's grace; yet so notwithstanding, that we be careful what we may for our parts, and always vigilant under God's protection. And, it falleth out sometimes by God's goodness, that when the devil is expelled from our soul, that⁴ he is so little of us to be feared, that contrariwise he is rather terrified by the virtuous and devout life of good people.

¹ The Elizabethan rendering of *Caliga*.

² *Veni, diabolus, discalcea me.*

³ Shoe-strings, *caligarum corrigiæ*.

⁴ The editor remarks on the frequent use of "the double *that*" in this early seventeenth-century translation.

CHAPTER V

Of a church of the Arians, and a hog running about in it, and other marvels—Of Redemptus, a bishop who had a vision of the end of the world—Peter asks for evidences of the immortality of the soul—Gregory consents to give them, though so busy, in a Fourth Book—Of the old wife of a priest—Of a little sister called Musa—Of the soul of Paschasius the deacon—Of one who died shortly after a promise (in a vision) of long life—Does burial in a church profit the soul?—Of a nun of ungracious temper, whose body, buried in a church, was found partly burned—The burial of Valerianus, an old man of wanton life—What is there that can profit the souls of the departed?—The monk Justus, who sinfully concealed money—A prisoner whose bolts fell off—The mariner Baraca.

Of a church of the Arians in the Suburra

iii. 30

NEITHER is that to be passed over in silence which God of His mercy vouchsafed, two years since, to show in this city, to the great condemnation of the Arian heresy; for part of that which I now intend to speak of many of the people know to be true; part the priest and the keeper of the church affirm that they saw and heard. A church of the Arians in that part of the city which is called Suburra, remained until two years since with the doors shut up; at which time, being desirous that it should be hallowed in the Catholic Faith, we brought with us thither the relics of the blessed martyrs St. Stephen and St. Agatha; and so with great multitudes of people, singing of praises to Almighty God, we entered the church; and when the solemnity of the Mass was in celebrating, and the people by reason of the strait place thrust one another, some of them which stood without the chancel heard an hog running up and down through their legs, and each one perceiving it told it to his next fellow; but the hog made towards the church door to go forth, striking all those into great admiration by whom he passed; but though they heard him, yet none there was that saw him; which strange thing our good God vouchsafed to show, to the end we should understand how that the unclean spirit which before possessed that place was now departed and gone. When Mass was done we went away,

but the night following such a noise was heard in the top of the church as though somebody had there run up and down ; and the next night after that a far greater ; and withal of a sudden such a terrible crack there was as though the whole church had been quite falling down : which forthwith vanished away ; and never after was the church troubled any more by the old enemy ; but by the great stir which he kept before his departure, he made it apparent that he went very unwillingly from that place which so long time he had possessed.

Upon another day, the lamps hanging without light, fire came from Heaven and set them a-burning ; and a few days after, when Mass was ended, and the keeper of the church had put out the lamps, and was departed, yet returning back again, he found them burning which before he had put out ; but thinking he had done it negligently, he did it now more carefully the second time, and so departed the church and shut the door ; but returning three hours after he found them again burning as before : to the end that by the very light the world might manifestly know how that place was from darkness translated to light.

Of the venerable bishop Redemptus

iii. 38

Redemptus, bishop of Ferentia, " a man of venerable life, who died seven years ago," had a vision of the end of the world. The barbarous and cruel nation of the Lombards, drawn as a sword out of a sheath, left their own country and invaded Italy, mowed down the people, wasted the cities, spoiled the towns and villages, burned the churches, destroyed the monasteries of men and women, left the farms desolate. And how it goeth in other parts of the world I know not ; but in the parts in which we live, the world doth not indeed announce its own end, but it shows it. Therefore so much the more zealously ought we to seek after eternal things, by how much we find all temporal so quickly to be fled and gone.

PETER. I beseech you for the spiritual good of many, to set down some reason for proof of the immortality of the soul, or the examples of some souls which have the same. For many Christians do doubt of the immortality of the soul after the dissolution of the body.

GREGORY. That is a work of great labour, especially for one that is busied with other affairs and hath other things to attend to. Yet if any profit may by my means redound to others, willingly do I prefer that before mine own will and pleasure. And therefore, God's grace assisting me, in this fourth book following I will clearly show that the soul doth live, after the death of the body.

The close resemblance of this to the later parts of Alfred's *Blooms* from the *Soliloquies* of *St. Augustine* is evident at a glance. Seven or eight examples, shortly stated, will set forth the curious method of proof which appeared to Gregory to be conclusive.

Of the old wife of a priest

iv. 2

Neither must I forget that which the reverend Abbat Stephen, who not long since died in this city, and whom you knew very well, told me to have happened in the province of Nursia. For he said that a priest dwelt in that country, who in the fear of God governed the church committed to his charge; and although after he had taken Orders he did still love his old wife as his sister, yet did he avoid her as his enemy, and never would he permit her to come near him upon any occasion, abstaining wholly from all intercourse or familiarity. For this is a thing proper to holy men, oft-times to deprive themselves of those things which be lawful, to the end they may remain the more free from such as be unlawful; and therefore this man, not to fall into any sin, utterly refused all necessary and requisite service at her hands. When this reverend man had long lived in this world, the fortieth year after he was made priest, by a great and vehement ague he was brought to the last cast. His old wife, beholding him so far spent, and to lie as though he had been dead, put her head near unto him, to see whether he did breathe or no: which he perceiving, having yet a little life left, enforced himself to speak as well as he could, and in great fervour of spirit broke out into these words, "Get thee away, woman; a little fire is yet left, away with the straw!" After she was gone his strength somewhat increasing, he began with great joy to cry out, "Welcome, my lords! Welcome, my lords! Why have you vouchsafed to visit me, your unworthy servant! I come, I come!

Thank you, thank you!" And when he did often repeat these and like words, his friends that were present asked him to whom he spake. With a kind of wonder he answered, "What! do you not here behold the holy Apostles! Do you not see the chief of them, St. Peter and St. Paul!" And so, turning himself again towards them, he said, "Behold I come, behold I come"; and as he spake the words he gave up his happy ghost. And that he did verily behold the holy Apostles he testified by that his departure with them. And thus it doth often fall out, by the sweet providence of God, that good men at their death do behold His saints coming before them, and leading, as it were the way, to the end they should not be afraid of the pangs thereof; and that while their souls do see the saints in heaven, they may be discharged from the prison of this body, without all fear and grief.

Of a little sister called Musa

iv. 17

The servant of God, Probus, used to tell of a little sister he had, called Musa. One night the Blessed Lady appeared to her in vision, showing her sundry young maidens of her own years, clothed all in white; whose company she much desiring, but yet not presuming to go among them, the Blessed Virgin asked her whether she had any mind to remain with them and to live in her service; to whom she answered that willingly she would. Then Our Blessed Lady gave her charge not to behave herself lightly, nor to live any more as a girl, to abstain from laughing and pastime, telling her that after thirty days she should be admitted to her service, among those virgins whom then she saw. After this vision the young maid forsook all her former behaviour, and with great gravity avoided the levity of her childish years. Which thing her parents perceiving, they did ask her from whence that change proceeded. She told them what the Blessed Mother of God had given her in commandment, and upon what day she was to enter her service. Five-and-twenty days after, she fell ill of an ague. Upon the thirtieth day, when the hour of her departure was come, she beheld Our Blessed Lady accompanied with those virgins which before she saw in vision to come unto her. Being called to come away, she answered with her eyes modestly cast down,

and very distinctly spoke in this manner, "Behold, Blessed Lady, I come: Behold, Blessed Lady, I come"; in speaking which words she gave up the ghost, and her soul left her virgin body, to dwell for ever with the holy virgins in heaven.

On this the deacon Peter remarked, "Seeing mankind is subject to innumerable vices, I think that the greatest part of Heaven is plenished with little children and infants."

Of the soul of Paschasius the deacon

iv. 40

When I was yet in my younger years, and lived a secular life, I heard from the mouth of mine elders, who knew it to be true, how that Paschasius, a deacon of this Roman Church, whose sound and eloquent books of the Holy Ghost be extant amongst us, was a man of a wonderful holy life, a marvellous giver of alms, a lover of the poor, and one that contemned himself. This man, in that contention which, through the exceeding hot emulation of the clergy, fell out between Symmachus and Laurence, made choice of Laurence to be Bishop of Rome; and though he was afterwards by common consent overcome, yet did he continue in his former opinion till his dying day: loving and preferring him whom the Church, by the judgment of Bishops, refused for her governor.¹ This deacon ending his life in the time of Symmachus, Bishop of the Apostolic See, a man possessed with a devil came and touched his dalmatic, as it lay upon the bier, and was forthwith delivered from that vexation. Long time after, Germanus, Bishop of Capua, by the counsel of physicians, for the recovery of his health, went to the baths; into which after he was entered, he found there standing in those hot waters the aforesaid Paschasius, ready to do him service. At which sight being much afraid, he demanded what so worthy a man as he was did in that place²: to whom Pas-

¹ On the death of Anastasius II. in 498, Symmachus and Laurentius both claimed to be Bishop of Rome. The dispute came before Theodoric, the Arian king. He decided that the one of the two was Bishop of Rome who was first consecrated and had the largest number of adherents. This meant the appointment of Symmachus, and Laurentius became anti-bishop. Symmachus held the Bishopric of Rome till his death in 514. The other Symmachus, who was chief of the Senate and father-in-law of Boethius, was beheaded by the same Theodoric the year after Boethius was executed in 524. Theodoric himself died in 526. It is interesting to have from Gregory the ecclesiastical view of the appointment of his predecessor Symmachus.

² The probable meaning is in that menial capacity after death.

chasius returned this answer : " For no other cause," quoth he, " am I appointed to this place of punishment, but for that I took part with Laurence against Symmachus : and therefore I beseech you to pray unto Our Lord for me, and by this token ye shall know that your prayers be heard, if at your coming again you find me not here." Upon this, the holy man Germanus betook himself to his devotions, and after a few days he went again to the same baths, but found not Paschasius there : for seeing his fault proceeded not of malice, but of ignorance, he might after death be purged from that sin. And yet we must withal think that the plentiful alms which he bestowed in this life obtained favour at God's hands, that he might then deserve pardon when he could work nothing at all for himself.

PETER. What, I pray you, is the reason, that in these latter days, so many things come to light which in times past were not known, in such sort that by open revelation and manifest signs, the end of the world seemeth not to be far off.

GREGORY. So it is, for the nearer that this present world draweth towards an end, so much the more the world to come is at hand, and sheweth itself by more plain and evident tokens.

Of one who in his dream had long life promised him, and yet died shortly after

iv. 49

Not long since, it is most certain that this befell to one that lived amongst us ; who, being much given to observe dreams, had one night in a dream long life promised him : and when he had made provision of great store of money for the maintenance of his many days, he was so suddenly taken out of this life that he left it all behind him, without ever having any use thereof, and carried not with him any good works to the next world.

PETER. I remember very well who it was : but let us, I pray you, prosecute such questions as we began to treat of. Doth any profit, think you, redound to men's souls, if their bodies be buried in the church ?

*Whether it profit the soul that the body be buried in
a church?*

iv. 50

GREGORY. Such as die not in mortal sin receive this benefit by having their bodies buried in the church: for when their friends come thither and behold their sepulchres, then do they remember them and pray unto God for their souls: but those that depart this life in the state of deadly sin receive not any absolution from their sins, but rather be more punished in hell for having their bodies buried in the church: which thing shall be more plain if I do briefly tell you what concerning this point hath chanced in our time.

We may here interpose the remark that this same question was addressed to St. Augustine by St. Paulinus, on which Augustine wrote "on care for the dead." The Benedictine editors remark that in their time any Christian could be buried in a church on payment of money, but "gratis" not even good men could be buried in a church.

Gregory continues by telling of a certain nun that was buried in the church of St. Laurentius, who appeared burned.

iv. 51

Felix, Bishop of Porto, a man of holy life, who was born and brought up in the province of Sabina, saith that there lived in that place a certain nun, which though she was chaste of her body, yet had she an ungracious and foolish tongue: which departing this life was buried in the church, the keeper whereof, the night following, saw her by revelation brought before the holy altar, where she was cut in two pieces, and the one half was burned in the fire, and the other half was not touched at all. Rising up in the morning, he told unto others what a strange vision he had seen, and showed them the very place in which she was burned, the marble whereof appeared with the very marks and signs of a fire upon it, as though that woman had been there burned in very deed with corporal fire. By which we may plainly see that such as have not their sins pardoned can reap small benefit by having their bodies after death buried in holy places.

Of the burial of the patrician Valerianus

iv. 52

John also, an honourable man, the deputy Prefect of this City, of great gravity and credit, as we know, told me how one Valerianus, a patrician of the city of Brescia, departed this life, whose body, for money, the bishop was willing should be buried in the church. This Valerianus, even to his very old age, lead a light and wanton life, refusing utterly to give over sin and wickedness. That very night in which he was buried, the blessed martyr Faustinus, in whose church his body lay, appeared to the keeper thereof, saying : "Go and bid the bishop cast out that stinking carcase which he has here buried, and if he will not do it, tell him that on the thirtieth day he shall die himself." This vision the poor man was afraid to report to the bishop, and though he was a second time admonished to do it, yet he refused : and so upon the thirtieth day the bishop, going safe and sound to bed, never fearing any such thing, suddenly departed this life.

*Of the body of Valentinus, cast out from the church
after death*

iv. 53

There be also to this day here in our city our venerable brother Venantius, Bishop of Luna, and Liberius, a noble man and one of great credit, both which do say that themselves know it, and that their servants were present in the city of Genoa when this strange thing happened. One Valentinus, who had the office of Defensor¹ in the Church of Milan, died there, a man in his lifetime given to wantonness and all kind of lightness, whose body was buried in the church of the blessed martyr Syrus. The midnight following, a great noise was heard in the place, as though some body by force had been drawn out from thence : whereupon the keepers ran thither, to see what the matter was. And when they were come, they saw two very terrible devils, that had tied a rope about his legs, and were drawing him out of the church, himself in the meantime crying and roaring out : at which sight they were so affrighted that they returned home

¹ Zacharias's Greek version has *δεφένσωρ*.

again to their beds. But when the morning was come, they opened the sepulchre in which Valentinus had been placed, and did not find his body. When they sought outside the church to see where the body was, they found it in another sepulchre, with the feet still bound as it was drawn out of the church. Out of which, Peter, you may learn that such as die in mortal sin, and cause their bodies to be buried in holy ground are punished also for their presumption: the holy places not helping them, but rather the sin of their temerity accusing them.

Gregory further enforced this lesson by the story of a dyer whose body was buried in a church and could not afterwards be found.

Peter, completely convinced, asked the rather natural question, "What thing is there, then, that can profit and relieve the souls of them that be departed?" The answer is given in three chapters.

• iv. 55

The sacred oblation of the Holy Host useth to help men's souls. This is evidenced by Bishop Felix, who told a remarkable experience of the pastor of the church of St. John at the diocese of Centumcellæ. And by a very interesting account of a monk Justus, very cunning in physic, who when dying told his brother, one Copiosus, of three golden crowns which he had sinfully hid.

iv. 56

Of the efficacy of the Holy Sacrifice, a vision of the Lord told to Cassius, the bishop of Narni.

iv. 57

Also the bolts fell off a certain prisoner on each of the days on which his wife caused the Holy Sacrifice to be offered for him. Also, one Baraca, now one of the clergy at Palermo, had been captain of a ship on which Agathus, the bishop of Palermo, was making a voyage. Baraca was hauling up the boat in a storm when the rope with which it was attached broke, and rope and boat and Baraca were swept away. Agathus offered the Holy Sacrifice for the drowned man, as dead, as soon as he arrived at the island of Ostica. He

afterwards found him alive at Porto, and learned that he was picked up by a ship on the day of the Sacrifice at Ostica. Gregory argued that if this was so when men were living, it must be true that to offer the Holy Sacrifice must be helpful to them when dead.

iv. 60

A chapter with the heading :

That we ought to pardon other men their sins, that we may obtain remission of our own, which has no dialogue, closes the Fourth and last book of the *Dialogues*.

THE SEVEN BOOKS OF OROSIUS AGAINST THE PAGANS

CHAPTER I

The purpose of Orosius's *History*—The *De Civitate Dei*—Troglus Pompeius and Justinus—St. Augustine's commission to Orosius—The Christians blamed for the miseries of Rome—The miseries were greater before Christianity—*Geography* to make *History* graphic—Ralegh's *History of the World*—Personality of Orosius—His dialogue with Augustine—Dante and Orosius—Dr. Bosworth's edition of the *Geography* and *History* of Orosius—The Anglo-Saxon manuscripts—The Early English Texts Society's edition.

THE book which King Alfred selected to teach his people the general history of the earlier world was written by Paulus Orosius, a Spanish presbyter, early in the fifth century. Its title was *Seven Books of Histories, against the Pagans*. The seven books covered the whole period from the creation of the world to the year A.D. 417. The concluding portion relates the events of his own time. All else he takes without examination, much of it from second-hand authorities, unintelligently, with no editorial skill and no discussion or reconciliation of contradictions and inconsistencies. The history is in large part useless as history. Greek historians at first hand appear to have been ignored by Orosius. It is impossible to take as reliable evidence his statements of events not elsewhere recorded.

The purpose of his history was very interesting. He tells in his closing paragraph, addressed to St. Augustine of Hippo, what he had set himself to do, and how St. Augustine himself had urged him to do it. It was the age of the breaking up of the Roman Empire. Dishonour and ruin had long threatened that effete institution, and had now been consummated by Alaric's sack of Rome in 410. The pagans, against whom Orosius wrote his history, maintained that all the disasters of Rome and Italy were due to the wrath of the ancient deities, whose worship had been abandoned for

a century and their altars profaned. The followers of Christ, they asserted, were the real cause of the disasters. Orosius compiled a series of evidences to show that from the first beginnings of history the world had been the scene of crimes as great, and men had groaned under destructions still more intolerable, from war and pestilence on the one hand, from earthquakes and volcanic eruptions on the other. Further, that they had had to bear all this without any knowledge of compensations in a world to come, any consolations from spiritual access to a God of infinite mercy and love.

The purpose of Orosius in writing the history of the world to show what terrible things had happened before there was any abandonment of pagan deities, or any mention of Christianity, was, within narrow limits, the same as the great purpose of Augustine in writing that most noble of theological books, the *De Civitate Dei*. With the smoking ruins of Rome Augustine contrasts the quiet and the stability of the spiritual City of God. If our theme were the *De Civitate Dei* instead of *Orosius contra paganos*, we should find remarkable parallels between the world at the end of our own great war and the world of Rome before and during and after the worst assaults of the barbarians. Mercifully, we should find contrasts at least as marked as the parallels. Augustine appears to have been writing the eleventh book of the *De Civitate Dei* when Orosius came into close contact with him, and we may understand that he set Orosius to work out the evidences which confirmed on the historical side his lofty spiritual theory. Thus the history of Orosius is for the most part a compilation of historical notes and passages, collected without scientific discretion from any available sources, and put together in a simple and easy style so far as the history is concerned. The remarks and reflections of the author, with which the history is punctuated, are in some cases so epigrammatic that they scarcely bear translation. That the book had the approval and recommendation of Augustine was quite sufficient to give it the ecclesiastical and general vogue which it retained well on into the Middle Ages. Its style and the interest of the events recorded made it a very readable text-book; but it has no claim to be authoritative, independent, or scientific.

In connexion with the history of Joseph in Egypt, Orosius quotes from "Pompeius the historian and his abridger Justinus," see page 98. Trogus Pompeius was a member

of a Gaulish family of the Vocontii. It would appear that he flourished under Augustus, the recovery of the standards of Crassus from the Parthians being described near the close of his history. He wrote mainly of Grecian affairs, his guides being Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, and Polybius. The forty-four books of his *History* are lost.

Justinus the historian, not Justin Martyr, wrote a history, also in forty-four books, which he tells us in a preface was entirely derived from the *History of the Whole World* by Trogus Pompeius. It is not an abridgment, nor is it a compendium; it is a collection of extracts, *breve florum compendium*, like Alfred's *Blooms*. We would much rather have had a compendium, for Justin's extracts make it clear that there was much in Pompeius which we do not find elsewhere. Justin's work was published in Venice in 1470. The earliest English version, by Arthur Goldinge, was printed at London in 1564.

We can now turn to the explanatory introduction of the book, as stated by the author in his address to St. Augustine :

I have obeyed your injunction, most blessed father Augustine. Would that I had done so as efficaciously as willingly.

You bade me write against the empty perverseness of those who, being far from the City of God, are called "pagans" because they are in out-of-the-way and desolate places, and "gentiles" because they savour of earthly things. They look not to the future, they remember not or know not the past. As for the present, they charge the times with being unwontedly evil because Christ is believed, and God is worshipped, while the idols are in less favour. You bade me collect, from all the records which are now available, and set out briefly and orderly all the stories I could find of misfortunes in past ages; the sufferings from war, disease, and famine, from terrible eruptions of flame and floods of water, from thunder and hail, from parricides and shameful crimes.

Orosius proceeds to point out that this request or demand came just when Augustine himself was writing his Eleventh Book against these same pagans, the ten preceding books having lighted up the world from the watch-tower of the Church. This was, of course, the eleventh of the twenty-two books of Augustine's great work "of the City of God," the

name of which Orosius had introduced in the opening sentence of his preface or introduction or dedication. He explains that he begins his history with Ninus, the Assyrian king, in accordance with Greek and Latin writers, who appeared to think that wars began with him, and that up to that time man had lived the life of cattle. In himself, he held that human misery began with the beginning of human sin, but the years from Adam to Ninus had not been treated of by human writers of history. As far back as history went there had been miseries ; no doubt in the ages before history there were miseries too.

Orosius concludes his introduction by explaining why he begins history with geography.

I am to speak [he says] of history from the building of the world to the building of the city [Rome], and thence to the reign of Cæsar and the birth of Christ, from which time the empire of the world has remained under the power of the city, and up to our own days. And so far as I suffice I am to call to the knowledge of my readers the conflictions of the human race, and the world blazing with evils in its various parts, set on fire by the torch of cupidity. This being so, I think it necessary that I should first describe the world, as inhabited by the human race, in the threefold division of our ancestors, in its regions and provinces ; in order that when the local destructions by war and disease are set forth, the studious may acquire knowledge not only of the things and the times, but also of the places.

The whole of this Alfred omits. It would have been interesting to have his remarks on it, and to gather from them his ideas of the true purpose and value of history. Bede has given us his own views on the subject. Another great Englishman, worthy to be named with Alfred and Bede, Sir Walter Raleigh, has left one of the most charming examples of English literature and English thought in his Introduction to the *History of the World*. That masterly preface has some points of kinship with the Introduction of Orosius, as a few extracts will show.

“ To repeat God’s judgments in particular upon those of all degrees which have played with His mercies, would require a volume apart : for the sea of examples hath no bottom.

Who hath not observed what labour, practice, peril, bloodshed, and cruelty, the kings and princes of the world have undergone, exercised, taken on them, and committed, to make themselves and their issues masters of the world? And yet hath Babylon, Persia, Egypt, Syria, Macedon, Carthage, Rome, and the rest, no fruit, flower, grass, nor leaf, springing upon the face of the earth of those seeds. No; their very roots and ruins do hardly remain.

"The reasons of whose ruins are diversely given by those that ground their opinions on second causes. All kingdoms and States have fallen (say the politicians) by outward and foreign force, or by inward negligence and dissension, or by a third cause arising from both. Others observe, that the greatest have sunk down by their own weight; of which Livy hath a touch: *Eo crevit, ut magnitudine laboret sua*. Others, that the Divine Providence (which Cratippus objected to Pompey) hath set down the date and period of every estate, before their first foundation and creation. But hereof I will give myself a day over to resolve.

"I will for the present examine what profit hath been gathered by our own kings, and their neighbour princes: who having beheld, both in divine and human letters, the success of infidelity, injustice, and cruelty, have (notwithstanding) planted after the same pattern. Wherefore those that are wise, or whose wisdom, if it be not great yet is true and well grounded, will be able to discern the bitter fruits of irreligious policy, as well among those examples that are found in ages removed far from the present, as in those of latter times."

Raleigh's *History of the World* begins thus:

God, whom the wisest men acknowledge to be a power uneffable, and virtue infinite; a light by abundant clarity invisible; an understanding which itself can only comprehend; an essence eternal and spiritual, of absolute pureness and simplicity; was and is pleased to make Himself known by the work of the world: in the wonderful magnitude whereof (all which He filleth and sustaineth), we behold the image of that glory which cannot be measured, and withal, that one and yet universal nature which cannot be defined. In the glorious lights of heaven we perceive a shadow of His divine countenance; in His merciful provision for all that live, His manifold goodness; and lastly, in creating and

making existent the world universal, by the absolute art of His own word, His power and almightiness ; which power, light, virtue, wisdom, and goodness, being all but attributes of one simple essence, and one God, we in all admire, and in part discern *per speculum creaturarum*, that is, in the disposition, order, and variety of celestial and terrestrial bodies : terrestrial, in their many strange and manifold diversities ; celestial, in their beauty and magnitude ; which in their continual and contrary motions, are neither repugnant, intermixed, nor confounded. By these potent effects we approach to the knowledge of the Omnipotent Creator, and by these motions, their Almighty Mover.¹

Orosius himself was far from being an uninteresting personality. The great African Father found him young in years but a presbyter (elder) in rank, zealous, alert in intellect, ready of speech, fitted to be useful in the work of the Lord. He sent him to Bethlehem to study under Jerome, who was then resident there ; we have the two letters which Augustine sent to Jerome by his hand. The intention appears to have been that he should study the question of Free Will, as a counteraction to the influence of Pelagius, who had for some years lived in Palestine. Orosius attended a synod at Jerusalem, under Bishop John of Jerusalem, when Orosius declared Pelagius a heretic. Some question of a personal character seems to have arisen between John as chairman and Orosius, who thought the interpreter ignorant and indeed dishonest. Some weeks after this, when the bishop was to celebrate at the church of the Holy Sepulchre on Holy Cross Day, Orosius presented himself as assistant at the altar. John at once attacked him as a blasphemer, a charge which Orosius denied, and refuted on the ground that as he spoke only Latin, and John spoke only Greek, John could not himself understand what it was that Orosius had said at the synod. Things on the whole went against Orosius, who eventually returned to Africa and we hear no more of him.

Among the voluminous works of Augustine of Hippo there is a Dialogue, in which Orosius asks sixty-five questions, and Augustine gives the sixty-five answers. The questions are for the most part elementary, some of them almost like the

¹ Much of this fine opening is so closely connected with the argument of Boethius in the *De Consolatione*, that we feel impelled to the belief that Ralegh had studied that book, perhaps in the then recent English version.

“posing” questions prepared by the opposition when we used to hold an annual meeting at the East End of London in the Oxford Hall. For example, Orosius asks, or is made to ask, how it was possible that the serpent could speak to Eve. Other questions go deep into fundamental things, deeper, it is necessary to say, than the answers. Two examples of question and answer may be given :

QUESTION XVI. Since God created all things good, and there is nothing that was not made by God, whence is evil ?

ANSWER. Evil is not nature ; but the privation of good has received that name. Good can exist without evil, but evil cannot exist without good ; nor can there be evil where there has not been good. On this account we speak of a good angel and a bad angel, a good man and a bad man ; but the angel is good as angel, but bad because he is vicious, the man is good as man, but bad because vicious. So when we say “good,” we praise nature, when we say “bad,” we blame not nature, but vice which is opposed to nature.

Orosius does not proceed to ask the question which naturally comes next, or rather to repeat his original question, Whence is evil ?

The sixty-second question is this : “How are we to know what man is sent by God ? ”

The answer is : Know that not he is sent by God whom the praise or flattery of a few selects, but he whom his life and manners adorn by the testing of apostolic priests, or who is approved by the judgment of the universal populace ; he who does not seek to be great, who does not give money to obtain the honour of bishopric. For of him who makes haste to be great, one of the fathers elegantly says : ‘ Know that he is not a bishop who seeks to be great, not to be helpful,’ *præesse non prodesse*.

This “elegant” diction is from Augustine’s own book on the City of God, xix. 19. Under the form “What manner of man should come to govern ? ” this question of Orosius is fully dealt with in the *Pastoral Care*, i. 10 ; see p. 148.

Orosius and his *History* had naturally a considerable influence on Dante, who mentions him by name seven times.¹ He is described in an unmistakable manner in the *Paradiso*, x. 118–20.

¹ Paget Toynbee, *Tracts on Dante*, 1894–1910, No. 3, pages 385–398 ; at the British Museum.

*Nell' altra piccioletta luce ride
 Quell' avvocato dei tempi cristiani,
 Del cui latino Augustin si provvide.*¹

The "Christian times" appear in every one of Orosius's seven books, and are named in the last lines of his history. As we shall see, they may be described as the text of his discourses.

Dante quotes Orosius by name in the *De Monarchia* four times. He quotes him (1) to prove that Mount Atlas is in Africa; (2) as his authority on the reigns of Ninus and Semiramis; (3) as regards the conquests of Vesoges, King of Egypt, and his repulse by the Scythians; (4) in connexion with the combat between the Romans and the Albans, the Horatii and the Curiatii.

In the *Purgatorio*, xii. 55-7, Dante is indebted to Orosius for his account of Cyrus and Tomyes—Thamyris—the Queen of the Scythians, whose son Cyrus had treacherously slain. When she in turn slew Cyrus, she had his head cut off and thrown into a leather bag full of blood.

*Mostrava la ruina e il crudo scempio
 Che fe' Tamiri, quando disse a Ciro :
 Sangue sitisti, ed io di sangue t'empio.*²

Orosius, ii. 7, sec. 6; *Satia te sanguine quem sitisti, cujus per annos triginta insatiabilis perseverasti.*

Besides compiling history, Orosius wrote as a preface to his history, as we have seen, an account of the geography of the world, that his readers might know where the people of whom he wrote were placed on the face of the earth.

Dr. Bosworth published in 1855 a fine edition of the *Description of Europe and the Voyages of Othhere and Wulfstan, written in Anglo-Saxon by King Alfred the Great; with his account of the Mediterranean islands, of Africa, and of the History of the World to the year 1413 B.C., chiefly taken from Orosius*. This edition contains, as stated on the title-page, "A facsimile copy of the whole Anglo-Saxon text from the Cotton Manuscript, and also from the first part of the Lauderdale Manuscript, a printed Anglo-Saxon text, based upon

¹ In the next little light laugheth that pleader for the Christian times, with whose discourse Augustine supplied him.

² It (the hard pavement) showed the destruction and the cruel slaughter which Tomyris wrought when she said to Cyrus: For blood thou didst thirst, and with blood I fill thee!

these manuscripts, and a literal English Translation and Notes." An octavo edition gives the whole of the *History*, down to 417 A.D., in the Anglo-Saxon and in modern English.

The Early English Text Society published a very useful edition in 1883, No. 79. It contains the Old-English text and the Latin original. The passages which Alfred omits are printed in italics in the Latin text.

The second volume, which was to contain an Introduction and Notes, with an English rendering, has not appeared.

The Cotton Manuscript is Tiberius B. 1; it is a handsome manuscript, well and spaciouly written.

The Lauderdale Manuscript is described by Dr. Bosworth as the property of John Tollemache, Esq., M.P., of Helmingham Hall, Suffolk, and Peckforton Castle, Cheshire. It is a good and clear manuscript, less spaciouly set out than the Cotton Manuscript.

Eight leaves had at some unknown time been torn out of the Lauderdale Manuscript, pp. 23-30. Dr. Bosworth had the contents of these pages reproduced in facsimile from the Cotton Manuscript, on parchment, and these were inserted in the Lauderdale Manuscript, which is now complete. This insertion was made "partly at the expense of the owner of the Lauderdale MS., John Tollemache, Esq."

Both of these manuscripts are of early antiquity, the Lauderdale MS. probably written in Alfred's lifetime, the Cotton MS. in the tenth century. There are many reasons for thinking that the Cotton MS. is copied from the Lauderdale, though there are some reasons which might suggest the Cotton scribe's independence of the Lauderdale. One example of the many reasons referred to may be given. At the very bottom of the last page of a sheet, the Lauderdale scribe began to write *Læcedemonia ealdorman*. He only had space enough for *Læcede*. Taking a fresh sheet, he seems to have forgotten that he had not completed the word, and he began his sheet with *ealdorman*. The Cotton scribe, not having reached the bottom of a page, wrote *Læcede ealdorman*.

CHAPTER II

Alfred's handling of Orosius's *Geography*—His quadrilateral of water boundaries—His account of the peoples near the Baltic—The voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan—The Murman Coast—The Esthonians—Britain and Ireland.

ALFRED dealt in a clear and masterly way with the geography of Orosius, naturally from a larger knowledge than Orosius could possess of the Germanic parts of the world. More than four and a half centuries had elapsed, and Alfred had personal experience of travel, as indeed Orosius had so far as Africa and the Mediterranean islands and Asia were concerned; it is to be noted, however, that Alfred does not give the slightest hint that he had himself travelled across Europe and visited Rome. It is obvious that an English king in 890, and an African monk in 410, would take different views as to what parts of the world it was important to describe in detail, and this difference may be expected to show itself, as indeed it does.

Dr. Bosworth's valuable publication was not on *Alfred's Geography of the World by Orosius*, but on *Alfred's Geography of Europe by Orosius*. As a matter of fact, Alfred followed consistently the skeleton of the whole of Orosius's *Geography*, in the course of which he came upon the sentence, "Now we will speak as much as we know about the boundaries of Europe," and with that sentence Dr. Bosworth's *Alfred*, and the king's deeply interesting and able digression, begin.

Orosius himself had begun, as does Alfred's *Orosius*, with the statement that there are three parts of the world, Asia, Europe, Africa, though some have said there are two parts, the one, Asia, the other Europe with which Africa should be included. Both alike proceed to give a very brief definition of the three parts, and then both alike take the three parts separately, and dwell upon them in the order stated in the opening paragraph, Asia, Europe, Africa. Finally, both alike describe the islands of the Mediterranean Sea.

Under the head of Asia, they treat of India, Arachosia

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(a province of Persia), Parthia, Media, Assyria, Persida, Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Armenia, Asia Minor, Egypt Lower and Upper, Syria, Phœnicia, Palestine, Mount Caucasus, the Caspian Sea. They then take Europe, giving first its boundaries, and then dealing with Moesia, Thrace, Macedonia, Achaia, Dalmatia, Pannonia, Noricum, Rhætia, Italy, Gallia Belgica Lugdunensis and Narbonensis, Aquitania, Spain, the British Isles. Then they take Africa, with Libya Cyrenaica and Pentapolis, Tripoli, Byzacium, Numidia, Mauretania. Finally, the Mediterranean islands, Cyprus, Crete, the Cyclades, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, the Balearic Isles.

Alfred closely followed Orosius till he came to the sentence "Now we will speak, as much as we know, about the boundaries of Europe," or, as Orosius wrote it, *Nunc Europam in quantum cognitioni hominum conceditur stilo pervagabor*. From that point he did not in any full sense translate, and did not keep to the order or the statements of Orosius. As in other cases we shall mark Alfred's own contributions by single inverted commas.

'From the River Don westward to the River Rhine which springs from the Alps and then runs right north into the arm of the ocean that lies round the country called Britain, and again south to the River Danube, whose spring is near the River Rhine, and which afterwards runs east by the country north of Greece into the Mediterranean Sea'—Alfred, like other early geographers, regarded the Black Sea as a gulf of the Mediterranean; elsewhere he calls it Euxine—'and north to the ocean which is called the White Sea, within these are many nations, but they call it all Germania.'

Alfred's quadrilateral of water boundaries, including the large space which he says they call Germany, is not Orosius's arrangement. Orosius tells of the Alani, and the Dacians, and Goths, and then adds, "then comes Germany, the land the chief part of which the Suebi hold."

Here Alfred leaves Orosius and gives us a very careful account, apparently compiled by himself from other sources, of the peoples in the neighbourhood of the Baltic (a map is given on the frontispiece), thus carrying out his desire that his people should know something of the lands whence they came.

'Then to the north, from the spring of the Danube and to the east of the Rhine, are the East Franks'—so called to

distinguish them from the Franks in Gaul—‘and to the south of them are the Suabians, on the other side of the River Danube. To the south and to the east are the Bavarians, that part which is called Ratisbon’—Alfred’s Regnesburh, the modern Regensburg, was then the name of the district. ‘Right to the east of them are the Bohemians, and north-east are the Thuri [Thuringians]. To the north of them are the Old Saxons’—between the Eyder and the Weser, the parent stock of the English Saxons; they once occupied the whole north-west corner of Germany, and were very warlike and powerful. ‘To the north-west of them are the Friesians’—their tradition is that Hengist was a Friesian, and was expelled from his country,

*een biet Engistus, een Vriese, een Sas,
die uten lande verdreven was.*

‘To the west of the Old Saxons is the mouth of the River Elbe and Friesland. From thence north-west is the country called Anglen’—whence the Angles came to England, Anglesland—‘and Zealand and some part of Denmark. To the north are the Apdrede’—the Slavonic Obotrites, who occupied the greater part of the Duchy of Mecklenburg—‘and north-east the Wylte, who are called Hæfeldan’—of whom see later. ‘To the east of them is the country of the Wends, who are called Sysyle’—the Wends or Venedi were Slavonians who once occupied the whole south of the Baltic coast, called Heneti by the Greeks, Venedi by the Romans, Wenden by the Germans; the name Sysyle has been the subject of guesses. ‘South-east of the Wends, at some distance, are the Moravians’—Alfred’s Maroaro, from the River Marus or Maharus which runs through their country and joins the Danube below Vienna. ‘These Moravians have to the west of them the Thuringians and Bohemians and part of the Bavarians. To the south of them, on the other side of the River Danube, is the country Carinthia, running south to the mountains called the Alps. To the same mountains extend the boundaries of the Bavarians and of the Suabians, and then, to the east of the country Carinthia, beyond the desert, is the country of the Bulgarians, and to the east of them Creca land’—not Greece, which is mentioned later, but the Byzantine Empire. ‘To the east of the country Moravia is the country of the Wisle’—the Vistula, called Wisla by the Poles—‘and east of that the Dacians who were formerly

Goths. To the north-east of the Moravians are the Dala-mensan'—occupying Misnia (Meissen) on both sides of the Elbe—'and to the east of the Dala-mensan are the Horiti'—the Croati of Pomerania—'and to the east of the Dala-mensan are the Surpe'—see later—'and to the west of them are the Sysele. To the north of the Horiti is Mægthaland'—perhaps part of Great Poland and East Prussia—'and north of Mægthaland are the Sermende'—see later—'even to the Rhipæan Mountains'—in the north-west of Scythia, where the Tanais, now the Don, rises.

'To the west of the South-Danes is the arm of the ocean which lies round the country of Britain; and to the north of them is the arm of the sea called the Baltic; and to the east and north of them are North-Danes, both on the Continent and on the islands; to the east of them are the Afræde,¹ and to the south of them is the mouth of the River Elbe, with some part of the Old Saxons.

'The North-Danes have to the north of them the same arm of the sea called the Baltic: to the east of them are the Esthonian people, and the Afræde to the south.

'The Esthonians have to the north of them the same arm of the sea, and also the Wends and Burgundians'—in the region of the Vistula and the Bug; 'and to the south are the Hæfeldan'—the Wilts, or Hæfeldan, each word meaning giants or monsters, occupied the eastern part of Mecklenburg and the Mark of Brandenburg; Notker, in describing anthropophagi, says that the Wilts were not ashamed to say that they had as much right as the worms had to eat the bodies of their parents.

'The Burgundians have the same arm of the sea to the west of them, and the Swedes'—Suiones—'to the north; east of them are the Sermende'—the modern Livonia, Esthonia, and part of Lithuania—'and to the south the Surpe'—Serbs, who occupied Lusatia, parts of Brandenburg, and Silesia.

'The Swedes have to the south of them the Esthonian arm of the sea, and to the east of them the Sermende'—as above—'to the north, over the wastes, is Cwen-land'—the district from the head of the gulf of Bothnia to the Cwen Sea, the White Sea—'and to the north-west are the Scride-

¹ We retain Alfred's spellings. In this case we have within a space of six lines *Afærede* and *Afærade*, while above we had *Apærede*. Similarly, we have *Surpe* and *Surfe*.

Finns'—the Finns who could pass rapidly over the snow on snow-skates [*on skridum*]'—and to the west the Northmen.'

The mention of the Northmen set Alfred off to describe the contemporary voyage of the Northman Ohthere to the Murman Coast, and that again set him off to describe another contemporary voyage, that of Wulfstan. As Wulfstan's voyage was confined to the Baltic, of whose southern coasts we have now seen so much, it would have been better to take his voyage first and then pass off to Ohthere's narrative; but Alfred blends the two narratives into one, and we must follow him in his own order. His story is of unsurpassed interest.

Ohthere's narrative was first published in modern English in 1598 by Hakluyt, the famous prebendary of the cathedral church of Bristol, a chief adventurer in the South Virginian Company. He described it as "the voiage of Oether made to the north-east parts beyond Norway, reported by himselfe vnto Alfred, the famous King of England, about the yere 890." "Wil it not," he asks, "in all posteritie, be as great renowne vnto our English Nation to haue bene the first discoverers of a sea beyond the north cape neuer certainly knowne before, and of a conuenient passage into the huge Empire of Russia by the bay S. Nicolas and the river of Duina?"

The King proceeds without preface, à propos of the Northmen,

'Ohthere told his lord King Alfred that he dwelt northmost of all Northmen. He said that he dwelt northward on the land by the west sea'—the east sea was the Gulf of Bothnia. 'He said that the land is very long to the north, but it is all waste, save that in a few places, here and there, Finns dwell, for hunting in winter and in summer for fishing in the sea. He said that at a certain time he wished to find out how far the land lay right north, or whether any man dwelt to the north of the waste. Then he went right north near the land'—we shall see later that his home was in Halgoland, the modern Helgeland, on the coast of Norway, a little south of the Arctic Circle. 'He left, all the way, the waste land on the right and the wide sea on the left, for three days'—this would take him within the Arctic Circle. 'Then was he as far north as whale-hunters ever go. He then went yet right north, as far as he could sail in the next three days.

Then the land bent in there right east, or the sea bent in on the land, he knew not whither'—he had, in fact, reached the North Cape—'but he knew that he there waited for a western wind, or a little to the north'—as the land to the east of the North Cape slopes gradually towards the south-east, this definition of the best wind is graphically correct—'and sailed thence east near the land as far as he could sail in four days.

'Then he must wait there for a right north wind, because the land bent there right south, or the sea bent in on the land, he knew not whether'—he had reached the Kola Peninsula on the Murman Coast, a name corrupted form for Norman. 'Then sailed he thence right south, near the land as far as he could sail in five days. There lay then a great river up into the land'—he must nearly have sighted the coast on the far side of the White Sea and eventually been carried by the wind into the Gulf of Archangel, and so to the mouth of the Dwina. 'They turned up into the river, because they durst not sail beyond it on account of hostility, for the land was all inhabited on the other side of the river'—they had left the Arctic Circle before they were half-way down on their southern course. 'He had not before met with any inhabited land, since he came from his own home, the land was all uninhabited on his right, save by fishermen, fowlers, and hunters, and they were all Finns; and there was always a wide sea on his left'—he did not know how comparatively narrow the passage south into the White Sea was. 'The Biarmians had very well peopled their land, but they durst not come upon it: the land of the Terfinns was all waste, save where hunters, fishers or fowlers encamped'—the Biarmians occupied the land east of the White Sea, the modern Permian, the Terfinns occupied the land between the Gulf of Bothnia and the North Cape.

'The Biarmians told him many stories both about their own country and about the countries which were round about them; but he knew not what was true, because he did not see it himself. The Finns and Biarmians, as it seemed to him, spoke nearly the same language. He chiefly went thither, in addition to the seeing of the country, on account of the horse-whales, *hors-hwæl*, because they have very good bone in their teeth: of these teeth they brought some to the king: and their hides are very good for ship-ropes.' The name horse-whale, given to this well-known seal

with large tusks, is said to be due to the fact, if it be a fact, that when alarmed they make a sound like the neigh of a horse. Our name walrus inverts the syllables of horse-whale, whale-ros, hros being a form of our word hors or horse. The bone of the tusk is so hard that dentists used to prefer walrus ivory to elephant ivory for artificial teeth.

'This whale,' Alfred continues, still using Ohthere, 'is much less than other whales: it is not longer than seven ells: the best whale hunting is in his own country, they are eight-and-forty ells long; of these he said that he was one of six who killed sixty in two days.' That last statement is only an attempt to make sense of an obscure passage in the manuscript. The Scandinavian ell is 2 feet; naturalists say that 14 feet and 96 feet are fair representations of the respective lengths of these two kinds of sea creatures.

'He was a very wealthy man in those possessions in which their wealth consists, that is, in the wilder animals. He had, moreover, when he came to the King, six hundred tame deer, unbought'—of his own breeding. 'They call these deer hranas' [rein-deer] 'of these, six were decoy deer, which are very valuable among Finns, because with these they take the wild deer. He was amongst the first men in the land, though he had not more than twenty horned cattle, twenty sheep, and twenty swine; and the little that he ploughed he ploughed with horses. But their revenue is chiefly in the tribute that the Finns pay them, which tribute is in skins of animals, feathers of birds, in whale-bone, and ship-ropes which are made from the whale's hide and from the seal's. Every one pays according to his means; the richest must pay fifteen skins of the marten, and five of the reindeer, and one bear's skin, and forty bushels of feathers, and a bear or otter skin kirtle, and two ship-ropes each sixty ells long, one made from the whale's hide and the other from the seal's.

'He said that the country of the Northmen was very long and very narrow. All that can be either pastured or ploughed lies by the sea, and that, however, is in some places very rocky. On the east lie wild mountains along the inhabited land; in these mountains Finns dwell; and the inhabited land is broadest eastward, and always narrower more northerly. Eastward it may be sixty miles broad, or a little broader, and midway thirty or broader; and northward, he said, where it was narrowest, that it might be three miles broad to the waste, and, moreover, the waste in some

places is so broad that a man may travel over it in two weeks, and in other places so narrow that a man may travel over it in six days.'

The dimensions here given are very far too small. It is evident that the King is giving Ohthere's exact figures, his mile being about five Anglo-Saxon miles. When the other voyage reaches the Frische Haff, it is evident that the King alters Ohthere's figures into Anglo-Saxon miles, and thus gives the correct present size of that freshwater lake. The Danish mile is 4.68 English miles, and the Swedish mile is 6.64 English miles.

The King continues the narrative. 'Then, over against this land southward, on the other side of the waste, is Sweden'—Sweoland, the country of the Suiones of Tacitus—'extend to the north, and over against the land northward is Cwenaland. The Cwenas sometimes make war on the Northmen over the waste, sometimes the Northmen on them. There are very large freshwater meres beyond the wastes, and the Cwenas carry their boats overland into the meres and thence make war on the Northmen. They have very little boats and very light.'

Cwenland was the country east and west of the Gulf of Bothnia from Norway to the White Sea. Adam of Bremen called it *Terra Feminarum*, the country of Amazons. This was due, we are told, to his having heard King Sweyn describing it in Danish, of which Adam had imperfect knowledge, and he misunderstood the King's Quana-land to mean Quinna-land, the country of women.

We must now pass away to Wulfstan, Ohthere's companion in his interview with Alfred. We need only take his very interesting description of Esthonia, a country to which recent events have called special attention. As in the case of Ohthere, so in the case of Wulfstan, the voyager gave his account in the first person to the King.

'Esthonia'—the east land—'is very large, and there are many towns, and in every town there is a king'—Esthonia declared itself an independent republic in November or December 1917. 'There is also very much honey and fishing. The king and the richest men drink mare's milk, but the poor and the slaves drink mead. There is very much war among them; and there is no ale brewed by the Esthonians, but there is mead enough.

'There is also a custom with the Esthonians that when a man is dead, he lies in his house unburnt, with his kindred and friends, for one month, sometimes two; and the king and other men of high rank, so much longer according to their wealth, remain unburnt sometimes half a year; and lie above ground in their houses. All the while the body is within, there must be drinking and sports, to the day on which he is burned.

'Then, the same day, when they wish to bear him to the pile, they divide his property which is left after the drinking and sports into five or six parts, sometimes into more, as the amount of his property may be. Then, they lay the largest part of it within one mile from the town, then another, then the third, till it is all laid within the one mile, and the least part shall be nearest the town in which the dead man lies. All the men who have the swiftest horses in the land shall then be assembled, about five or six miles from the property. Then they all run towards the property, and the man who has the swiftest horse comes to the first and largest part, and so each after the other till all is taken: and he takes the least part who runs to the part nearest the town. Then each rides away with the property and may keep it all: and, therefore, swift horses are there uncommonly dear. When his property is thus all spent, they carry him out, and burn him with his weapons and clothes.¹ Most commonly they spend all his wealth, with the long lying of the dead within, and what they lay in the way, which strangers run for and take away.

'It is a custom with the Esthonians, that there men of every tribe must be burned; and if any one find a single bone unburnt, they shall make a great atonement. There is also a power among the Esthonians of producing cold; and, therefore, the dead lie there so long and decay not, because they bring the cold upon them.² And if a man set two vats full of ale or of water, they cause that either shall be frozen over, whether it be summer or winter.'³

¹ The ancient Prussians burned their dead with their weapons and clothes. When they were converted they promised the German knights to abandon the practice.

² Phineas Fletcher, ambassador from Queen Elizabeth to Russia, relates that "in some parts of Muscovy, in winter time, when all is covered with snow, so many as die are piled up in a hovel in the suburbs like billets on a wood stack; they are as hard with the frost as a very stone till the spring time come to resolve the frost, what time every man taketh his dead friend and committeth him to the ground."

³ It is on record that every Prussian of any consequence had an ice-house in or near his house.

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Here Alfred's long and most interesting digression comes to an end, and he reverts to the geography of Orosius, which again he treats in a masterly manner, first combining in his mind the pith of the several short independent paragraphs, and then giving it all in a clear and continuous narrative, as though he had travelled through the country and had noted the lie of the various countries and peoples. He puts it thus :

'Now will we speak about Greece, on the south of the River Danube. The sea Propontis lies on the east of Constantinople,¹ a city of the Greeks. On the north of Constantinople, the arm of the sea shoots up right west from the Euxine ; and on the north-west of the city the mouth of the River Danube shoots out south-east into the Euxine Sea ; and on the south and on the west side of the mouth are the Mœsians, a tribe of Greeks ; and on the west side of the city are the Thracians ; and on the west of these the Macedonians. On the south of the city, and on the south side of the arm of the sea which is called Ægean, is the country of the Athenians and of Corinth. To the south-west of Corinth is the country of Achaia, by the Mediterranean Sea. These countries are peopled by Greeks. On the west of Achaia, along the Mediterranean,² is the country Dalmatia, on the north side of the sea, and on the north of Dalmatia are the Bulgarians, and Istria. On the south of Istria is that part of the Mediterranean Sea which is called Adriatic,³ and on the west the Alpine Mountains, and on the north that waste which is between Carinthia and the Bulgarians.'

Then Italy, Gaul, and Spain are described ; and then the island Britain, as follows :

'The island Britain. It extends a long way north-east ; it is eight hundred miles long and two hundred miles broad. On the south of it, and on the other side of the arm of the sea, is Gallia Belgica ; and on the west part, on the other side of the sea, is the island Hibernia ; and on the north part the Orkney Islands. Ireland, which we call Scotland, is on every side surrounded by the ocean ; and because it is nearer the setting of the sun than other lands, the weather

¹ The only mention of Constantinople by Orosius is this : Thrace has on the east the Gulf of Propontis and the city Constantinople which was first called Byzantium.

² Alfred throughout calls the Mediterranean the Wendel Sea.

³ Atriaticum.

is milder there than in Britain. Then, on the north-west of Ireland, is that outmost land called Thule ; and it is known to few because of its great distance.

‘Thus have we spoken about the boundaries of all Europe, as they lie. Now we will speak of Africa.’

Curiously enough, Orosius is more full in his description of the British Isles than Alfred is, and Alfred’s description is less adequate than Bede’s incidental account. Orosius writes on our islands as follows :

“ Britain, an island of the ocean, stretches a long way to the north. On the south it has the Gallic lands. The city called the port of Rutupus admits to the nearest shore those crossing the sea, and looks to the Menapi and Batavi not far from the Morini, on the south.¹ This island is eight thousand paces long and two thousand broad.

“ Behind Britain, where it lies open to the boundless ocean, are the Orkney Islands, twenty of which are desert, thirteen inhabited. Then the island Thule, separated from the other islands by a vast space, situated in mid ocean towards the west-north-west, is held to be known to very few people. The island Hibernia, placed between Britain and Spain, stretches a long way from south-west to north. It is nearer to Britain than to Spain ; smaller in area than Britain, but better in the character of its climate and soil. It is occupied by races of the Scots.”

¹ Belgic Gaul and Holland.

CHAPTER III

Orosius's *History*—The miseries of the early races—The Flood—Chronology—Alfred's omissions—Ninus, Semiramis, apples of Sodom—Alfred and Joseph, Deucalion, the Danaids, Busiris—Endless wickednesses—The dominance of women, Amazons, Marpesia, Lampeto, etc.—Slavery—Alfred's Will.

OROSIUS ends his geography and begins his history in the following words :

“ I have briefly gone through the provinces and the islands of the whole world. I will now show forth the local miseries of the several races, as from the beginning they have incessantly come upon them, and how and from what causes they have arisen.”

He begins to carry out the purpose here defined by a long chapter describing the wickedness of man, whom God had created righteous and unstained, and their punishment by a universal deluge. No mention is made of Noah or of any detail of the Flood, except that a few people were reserved in an ark to continue the race. That there was such a deluge, with nothing to be seen but sky and sea, even those who knew nothing of past times or of the Creator could see, when they found on high mountains stones rough with shells and mussels, and rock hollowed into caves by water. In case Gentile historians wrote about Christians, the deluge could be produced as the evidence of the transgression and condemnation of the whole human race.

Not a word of all this appears in Alfred's *Orosius*. Alfred merely says, at the end of his very long first chapter, ‘ We have now spoken shortly about the inhabited islands that are in the Mediterranean Sea,’ and proceeds with Chapter II, which begins the historical part of the work of Orosius. The King's translation is here very close, practically word for word ; as usual with him he gets bolder as he goes on. The Latin text used for our present purpose is that of Zange-meister, Leipsic, 1889.

It may be remarked here once for all that the chronology of Orosius is based on inadequate knowledge. The building of Rome was 753 years before the Christian era, and the date of the foundation of the Assyrian Empire was calculated by Clinton as 2182 B.C. The date given by Orosius, 1300 years and 753 before Christ, is 2053 B.C. It will not be necessary to refer again to this correction.

Orosius begins his *History* in detail with Ninus, King of Assyria. We mark Alfred's version, not in this case his additions, by single inverted commas. Put into modern English, it proceeds as follows :

Or. i. 4 ; A. i. 2 : 'One thousand three hundred years before the building of Rome, Ninus, King of Assyria, first began to reign in this mid-earth ; and, from an immeasurable longing for power, he harassed and fought for fifty years, until he had brought all Asia under his sway, from the Red Sea on the south to the Euxine on the north. He, moreover, often went with great armies into the north country of the Scythians, who are said to be the hardiest of men, though in worldly goods they are the poorest. Whilst he was fighting with them, they became skilful in the arts of war, though they had before lived a peaceable life. They afterwards bitterly repaid him for the art of war which they had learned from him ; and in their minds it was as agreeable to see the shedding of man's blood as it was to see the milk of their cattle, upon which they mostly lived. Ninus overcame and slew Zoroaster, King of the Bactrians, who was the first man to know the arts of the wizard. At last when he was in a city fighting against the Scythians, he was there shot dead with an arrow.

'After his death Semiramis his queen succeeded both to the war and to the kingdom. For forty-two years she carried on the same war, which she brought upon herself by her manifold wicked desires. Still, the power which the king had gained seemed too little for her, and therefore with womanly zeal she fought against the harmless people of Ethiopia, and against the Indians, with whom no man but Alexander, either before or since, went to war. She wished to overcome them in war, though she could not accomplish it. Such desires and wars were then more fearful than they now are, because before they knew no example of them, as men now do, for they lived a harmless life.' Alfred then follows Orosius in an account of the incontinence of Semiramis

which it is quite unnecessary to give here. Dante does not pass it over in the *Inferno*, where (v. 54-60) he translates one of Orosius's pungent phrases.

Or. i. 5 ; A. i. 3. Here Alfred omits the first half of the chapter in Orosius, which speaks of the region called Pentapolis, the five "cities of the plain" (Gen. xiii. 12), and makes quotations from Tacitus. The second half of the chapter is much abridged in Alfred's version, as follows :

'One thousand one hundred and sixty years before the building of Rome, the fruitful land on which were the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah was burnt up by fire from heaven. That was between Arabia and Palestine. There was an abundance of fruit, chiefly because the River Jordan every year overflowed the mid-land with water a foot deep, and thus manured it.' This detail is not in the Latin text.

'Then the people immoderately enjoyed this great wealth, till great sensuality waxed within them ; and for this sensuality God's wrath so came upon them, that He burned up all the land with sulphurous fire. Afterwards there was standing water over the land through which the river formerly flowed. The part of the dale which the flood did not reach is to this day fertile in fruits of every kind ; and they are very pleasant and fair to look upon, but when they are taken in hand, they turn to ashes.' It may be noted here that these last words have no corresponding words in the Latin text. But an edition of Orosius in 1471 had this and other details : "You may see there apples flourishing and bunches of grapes, which excite the appetite ; but if you pluck them they turn to ashes and give forth a fume as though they were burning." These were the fabled "apples of Sodom." Josephus gives the story.

Alfred here omits the whole of a very striking chapter of Orosius, contrasting Rome of his time with the cities of the plain. Orosius quotes as typical the saying of the Roman citizen when the Gothic king was at the gates, "If the games of the circus were kept up, he didn't care what happened to Rome," and ends with a solemn warning that the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah was intended to make men learn and understand how God has punished sinners, how He can punish them, and how He will. This was more in accordance with the purpose of Orosius in writing the History than with

Alfred's purpose in translating it for his people's information ; and accordingly he omits it.

Or. i. 8 ; A. i. 5 : ' Eight hundred years before the building of Rome, the Egyptians had very great fertility in their land, for seven years, and afterwards they were in the greatest famine for the next seven years. Then Joseph, a righteous man, helped them by divine aid. Of this Joseph, Pompeius, the heathen bard,¹ and his follower Justin, thus said : " Joseph was the youngest of his brethren, and also the wisest of them all ; so that the brethren, being afraid, took Joseph and sold him to chapmen, and they sold him into the land of Egypt." Pompeius also said that he there learned the arts of magic ; and that by these arts he used to work many wonders ; that he could thus well explain dreams ; and that thus by this art he became very dear to Pharaoh the king. He said that he by the art of magic had so learned divine wisdom that he had foretold the fruitfulness of the land for those seven years, and the want of the next seven years that came after ; and how by his wisdom he stored up in the former seven years, so that during the following seven years he supported all the people in the great famine. He said that Moses was Joseph's son, and that the arts of magic were naturally from him, because he wrought many wonders among the Egyptians. For the plague which came upon the land, the bard said that the Egyptians drove out Moses with his people ; because Pompeius and the Egyptian priests said that the god-like wonders, which were wrought in their land, were ascribed not to the true God but to their own gods, which are idols, because their gods are teachers of the arts of magic. The people still keep up this token of Joseph's law, because, every year, they give up, as tribute to the king, the fifth part of all the fruits of the earth.

' The famine in Egypt was in the days of the king who is called Amasis, though it is their custom to call all their kings Pharaoh. At the same time Belus reigned in Assyria, where Ninus was before. Among the people called Argives, Apis reigned as king. At that time there were not any kings except in these three kingdoms, but afterwards their example was followed all over the world.² It is a wonder that the

¹ In the Latin *historicus*, in the Anglo-Saxon *heathena scop*, the bard being the recorder of history. On Pompeius and Justin, see pages 76 and 77.

² This is not in Orosius.

Egyptians felt so little thanks to Joseph for his having rid them of the famine that they soon dishonoured his kindred, and made them all their slaves. So also it is still in all the world : if God for a very long time grant any one His will, and He then takes it away for a less time, he soon forgets the good which he had before, and thinks upon the evil which he then hath.' ¹

Or. i. 9 ; A. i. 6 : ' Eight hundred winters and ten years before the building of Rome, Amphictyon the king reigned in Athens, a city of the Greeks. He was the third king that reigned after Cecrops, who was the first king of that city. In the time of this Amphictyon, there was so great a flood over all the world, though most in Thessaly, a Grecian city, about the mountains called Parnassus, where King Deucalion reigned, that almost all the people perished. King Deucalion received all those who came to him in ships to the mountains, and fed them there. Of this Deucalion it was said as a proverb that he was the parent of mankind, as Noah was.' ²

Or. i. 11 ; A. i. 8 : ' Six hundred and five years before the building of Rome, fifty men in Egypt were all slain in one night by their own sons, and all these men were the offspring of two brothers. When this was done, the brothers were still living. The elder, with whom this evil began, was called Danaus. He was driven from his kingdom and fled into the country of Argos, and Sthenelas the king welcomed him there, though he afterwards repaid him with evil when he drove him from his kingdom.' ³

' In those days, it was the custom of Busiris, King of Egypt, to sacrifice all the strangers that visited him, and to offer them to his gods.' So far Alfred follows Orosius. But then he makes a bold interposition, and attributes it his author—Quoth Orosius : ' I wish now that they would answer me, who say that this world is worse at present, under Christianity, than it was before in heathenism, when they made such sacrifices and were guilty of such murder as I have just said. Where is it now, in any Christian country, that among themselves a man needs dread such a thing as to be sacrificed to any gods ! or where are our gods that desire such crimes as theirs ! '

¹ This is not in Orosius.

² Orosius only says " on this account they say that by him the human race was restored."

³ It is not necessary to point out such errors as occur in this passage. Alfred is misled by the use of *parricidium* for the murder of any one nearly related to the murderer. *Inter filios . . . fratrum quinquaginta parricidia unius nocte commissa sunt.*

It may be noted that Boethius, too, made use of the case of Busiris. In Prose 6 of Book II, Philosophy is pointing out that tyrants cannot force from tranquillity the mind that is composed by Reason. As a further limitation or corrective of physical power, Reason asks what is there that a tyrant can do that may not in turn be done to the tyrant. Busiris used to kill his guests. He was himself killed by his guest, Hercules.

St. Augustine, also, instances Busiris in his *City of God*.

Or. i. 12; A. i. 8: 'Quoth Orosius: I know well that I must here pass over much, and must shorten the story which I tell, because the Assyrians bore rule one thousand one hundred and sixty years under fifty kings, and it never was without war until Sardanapalus was slain, and afterwards power was given to the Medes. Who is there that can count or relate all the evils which they did? Moreover, I will be silent about the most shameful stories of Tantalus and Pelops; how many scandalous wars Tantalus waged after he was king; about the boy Ganymedes, whom he took by force; and how he killed his own son as an offering to his gods, and he himself dressed him as meat for them. I shall also weary if I speak about Pelops, and about Dardanus, and about the wars of the Trojans, because their wars are known in history and in poetry. I must also pass over all things that are said of Perseus and of Cadmus; and also those that are said of the Thebans and of the Spartans. I will likewise pass over in silence the wicked deeds of the Lemniades, and of King Pandion, how cruelly he was driven away by the Athenians, his own people. How Atreus and Thyestes slew their own fathers I pass over, and all about their hateful adulteries. I also pass over how Œdipus slew his own father, and his stepfather, and his stepson. In those days were such unbounded evils that one of themselves said the very stars of heaven fled from their wickedness.'

Well might Orosius weary of telling such things and quote but little from the striking tragic poem of Phanocles, to whom he refers by name. Alfred wearied earlier than Orosius. He cuts out Eteocles and Polynices and Medea.

In Alfred's tenth chapter of the First Book of his *Orosius*, he combines the contents of three chapters of the original Latin, chapters 14, 15, 16. He emphasizes Orosius's statements of the power of women in war; and he largely adds to

the comparison with Christian times of which Orosius in this place makes comparatively little.

The actions of women as recorded by Orosius are sufficiently remarkable. In the year 1233 B.C., Vesoges, King of Egypt, waged war in the south of Asia and conquered much territory. He then went north with his army to attack the Scythians, first sending word to them of his purpose to waste their land unless they paid him tribute. Alfred after his fashion gives a personal tone to the history by making the Scythian delegates speak. They said, 'That it was greedy and unjust that so wealthy a king should go to war with so poor a people,' and their answer was, 'That they would rather fight him than pay taxes.' They then defeated Vesoges; invaded Egypt and wasted it; turned homewards by the west of the Euphrates—which Orosius does not say; forced all Asia to pay them taxes; and for fifteen years harassed and wasted the land. Then Alfred again introduces a personal touch in place of the cold historical statement of Orosius. Their wives sent them word 'That if they didn't come back to them they would have children by their neighbours.'

At the same time, Alfred proceeds, two nobles were driven out of Scythia and conquered territory between Capadocia and Pontus, near Asia the Less. This geographical statement is different from Orosius's. After a short time, they were slain by treachery by the people of the land. Then their wives, not only the wives of the two princes, but of the men slain with them, too, were so sore in their minds and so much grieved, that they took up arms with the view of avenging their husbands. Soon after, they slew all the men that were in their neighbourhood. This they did to cause the other wives to be as full of grief as themselves, that they might afterwards have their help, and be more able to avenge their husbands. Then all the women came together and waged war on the people and slew all the males, taking much of the land into their hands. In the midst of the war they made peace with the men.

That is a considerable expansion of Orosius's epigrammatic record.

Orosius then proceeds to say succinctly that the victorious women entered into sexual relations with men outside the territory. This Alfred again expands, thus,—'It was afterwards their custom that each year, about twelve months,

they went together, and then bore children.' Orosius says, 'They killed the male children that were born and carefully nourished the female children,' which Alfred renders, 'whenever the women had children, they reared the females and slew the males.' The two historians then agree in the statement that they seared the right breast of the girls to prevent its growth, so that there might be no hindrance to drawing a bow at full strength, whence they were called Amazons¹; that is in English, Alfred adds, 'seared,' *fortende*.

The description of the terrifying power of the warlike women is continued by Orosius, and Alfred rather revels in it. This is what he says:

'Two of their queens, Marpesia and Lampeto, divided the army into two parts, one to be at home to hold the land, the other to go out to war. They overran the greatest part of Europe and Asia, and built the city of Ephesus and many more in Asia the Less. Then they sent the greatest part of their army home with their booty, and left the other part to hold the country. Marpesia the queen was slain there, and a great part of the army that was with her, and her daughter Sinope became queen. Sinope, besides her courage and her manifold virtues, ended her life in maidenhood.

'In those days there was so great a dread of these women, that neither Europe nor Asia nor any of the neighbouring countries could think or plan how to withstand them, till they had chosen Hercules the giant to overcome them by all the arts of the Greeks. Yet he durst not venture to attack them with an army before he began with Grecian ships, called Dulmunus, of which it is said that one ship would hold a thousand men.² Then he stole upon them, unawares by night and grievously slew and destroyed them; and yet he could not take away their land. In those days two of their queens were sisters, Antiope and Orithyia, and Orithyia was taken. After her Penthesileia took the sovereignty, who in the Trojan War became very great.'

Or. i. 16; A. i. 10: 'It is shameful, said Orosius, to speak about what then happened, when such poor and such strange women had overcome the most powerful part and the bravest

¹ The ordinary explanation of this word is in accordance with the fable, "deprived of the breast." It is on this account that in works of art the right breast of the Amazon is hidden. Another interpretation of the Greek makes it mean "dried up," from *ἄνω*.

² Orosius only says that Hercules prepared "nine long ships."

men of all the world in Europe and Asia. Then they almost entirely wasted and destroyed the old cities and old towns. After they had done that, they both settled kingdoms and built new cities ; and for nearly a hundred years they ruled the whole world as they wished. Men were then so familiar with every trouble, that they held it as little or no disgrace, and as no evil, that the poor women so tormented them.

‘Now the Goths came from the bravest men of Germany, whom both Pyrrhus the fierce King of the Greeks, and Alexander, as well as Julius the powerful emperor, all feared to meet in battle.¹ How immoderately, O Romans, do ye murmur and complain that it is worse with you now, under Christianity, than it then was with the people, because the Goths harassed you a little, and broke into your city, and slew some of you. From their knowledge, and their bravery, they might have had power over you against your will ; but now they quietly ask a peaceable agreement with you, and some part of the land, that they may be able to help you. Ere this it lay barren and waste enough, and you made no use of it. How blindly many people speak about Christianity, that it is worse than it was formerly. They will not think nor know that before Christianity no country of its own will asked for peace of another unless it were in need ; nor where any country could obtain peace from another by gold, or by silver, or by any fee, without being enslaved. But since Christ was born, Who is the peace and freedom of the whole world, men may not only free themselves from slavery by money, but countries also are peaceable without enslaving each other. How can you think that men had peace before Christianity, when even their women did such manifold evils in this world.’

It is curious to note that from the words ‘How immoderately, O Romans, do ye murmur’ to the end of the chapter, Alfred leaves his author and says very much more in favour of Christianity and its peaceful effect than Orosius himself says. He makes more of the contrast between the former times and the time then present than Orosius does, though that was the exact point on which the History of Orosius was compiled. The references to the purchase of personal freedom by money was a feature of Anglo-Saxon

¹ From this point to the end of Alfred’s tenth chapter he leaves his author.

times. In those times men from various causes fell in England from the position of freeman to the position of slave. An English Church Council laid it down as early as 816 that bishops should by will restore to the position of freedom all the men on their land who from some of these causes, during their tenure of the lands of the bishopric, had lapsed from freedom into the position of slave. We have a vigorous appeal from Alfred himself on this subject in his will, combined with a reference to authority outside his own person and office on a point on which a lesser man might have trusted to the very strong sense of the time in favour of a "last Will and Testament." 'I beseech,' he wrote, 'in God's name and in the name of His Saints, that no one of my relations or heirs obstruct the freedom of those whom I have redeemed. The West Saxon Witan have pronounced it lawful that I may leave them free or bond as I will. But I, for God's love and for my soul's advantage, will that they be master of their freedom and of their will; and in the name of the living God I bid that none disturb them, neither by money exaction nor by any manner of means.'

CHAPTER IV

What a Roman Triumph was, and the Senate—The Fabian gens—
Alexander the Great—Alfred's account of Hannibal—Orosius's account
of Hannibal.

OR. ii. 5 ; A. ii. 4 : ' In the year 501 B.C. the Sabine War occurred, when Marcus Fabius was made Dictator. Twenty years later, the Veientes and Etruscans made war upon Rome. The consuls Marcus Fabius and Cælius Manlius defeated them ; but the victory was won at so great cost of life that Fabius, who alone of the consuls survived, refused the triumph offered him by the Senate on his way home. They had better, he said, have met him weeping than offering triumph.' That account Alfred gives in close agreement with Orosius, and he then proceeds to explain to his English readers what was meant by a Triumph, and what was meant by the Senate.

' What they called a triumph,'¹ he writes, ' was, when they had overcome any people in battle, it was their custom for all the senators¹ to meet their consuls,¹ after the battle, six miles from the city, with a chariot adorned with gold and precious stones, and to bring quadrupeds,² two white. As they went homeward, the senators rode in chariots after the consuls, and the men who had been taken they drove before them bound, that their great actions might be seen in a more lordly state. But if they brought any people under their power without a battle, when they came homeward they were to meet them from the city with a chariot mounted with silver, and one of each kind of four-footed beasts, in honour of their consul. That was then a triumph.

' Romulus was the first to form a senate ; that was a hundred men, though after a time there were three hundred of them. These always dwelled within the city of Rome, in order that they might be their counsellors, and appoint consuls that all the Romans should obey them, and that they should keep under one roof all the wealth which they

¹ *Triumphans, senatus, consulas.*

² *Fower-fetes.*

had gained either by tribute or by pillage, that they might afterwards apply it in common to the use of all who were free from bondage.'

After this twofold excursus, Alfred returns to Orosius's story of the three hundred and six Fabii, and their passing out of Rome by the Carmental gate, and their camp against the Veientes on the River Cremera, and their total destruction. But Orosius told the story inexactly, and Alfred much misunderstood Orosius, and so what the Anglo-Saxon readers learned of the legend of the Fabian gens was rather far from being historical.

Or. iii. 20 ; A. iii. 9 : There is a very striking passage in *Orosius*, containing reflections on the great achievements of Alexander in his unparalleled progress of victory through the world. Orosius puts the case of the conquered nations, and asks how they regarded the matter. Alexander and other leaders of that type had come down in history as great kings of mighty prowess. Such a man in the time of Orosius would be described as a most cruel enemy. Their progresses came down to the times of Orosius as triumphal processions. In the time of Orosius such progresses would be described as terrible miseries. The whole world in those earlier times was suffering violence, and the moderns looked back to it as a time of splendour. The moderns saw all the world in their time secure, at peace, save one corner ; and because that one corner was suffering, they bewailed the misery of the times in comparison with the splendid times of the past. If they talked of the prowess of their foes, the prowess of their foes was less than the prowess of the great kings of the past. If they talked of the misery of the Romans, the misery of the Romans was less than the misery of those who suffered under the great kings.

It is a fine piece of writing in itself, and it was a pointed answer to those who blamed Christianity as the cause of the troubles of the times. Indeed it may be described as containing the pith of the seven books of Orosius's *Histories* against the Pagans.

Alfred saw the point, and took it up. More than that, he brought the Christians upon the scene, which in this passage Orosius had not done. But, as in so many other cases, our forceful language, in that its early stage, did not lend itself to the pointed neatness of the Latin epigram, and

lacking that it lost some of the point of the original. *Si virtus vocanda est, minor est nostrum ; si miseria, minor est Romanorum.*

Alfred's treatment of the whole long passage is brief ; and yet, after his fashion, he amplifies by illustrations of his own. Orosius had mentioned the embassies from Europe that followed Alexander through Assyria and India, and found him at Babylon, seeking assurances of peace. Nearly half of what Alfred has to say turns on this point.

' Now let them think how it was with those who were in the west of this earth and so much dreaded him that they, for the sake of peace, sought him out in the east, at great risk and at great uncertainty, both in dread of the sea, and of wild beasts in deserts, and of many kinds of serpents, and in the languages of nations.'

Those zoological and linguistical enrichments have no place, ever so indirectly, in the original. They were the King's method of driving into the minds of his people the extraordinary efforts made to seek peace with the great conqueror, and the special dangers and difficulties of the effort.

It has been said above that Orosius does not mention the Christians in this passage, and Alfred does. To Orosius, the text as it were of his whole discourse was " these Christian times." To Alfred it was natural to put the point definitely in his summary. Orosius had begun the remarkable passage with the exclamation, *O dura mens hominum*, O the dull mind of man ! Alfred, who never scrupled to put words into the mouth of his author, as in the case of the beasts and serpents, began his short summary thus :

' Quoth Orosius : O how great is the folly of men in these Christian days ! Though they have but little uneasiness, how woefully they bemoan it ! It is one of these two,—either they do not know, or they will not know, in what wretchedness those were who lived before them. Now let them think,' etc.

In order that we may form some satisfactory idea of the manner in which Alfred deals with the history of Orosius, it will be well to take some one continuous passage and give the author of the Latin history following the author of the Anglo-Saxon version. The passage selected must

naturally be one where Alfred makes definite additions. Omissions are not in the same sense significant, though as possible indications of personal feeling they may be very expressive. We will take a part of the history which would naturally have special interest for a king of many fights and long wars against foreign enemies of his realm. The story shall be that of Hannibal.

ALFRED ON HANNIBAL

Or. iv. 14; A. iv. 8: 220 B.C. 'Hannibal, King of the Peni, beset Saguntum, a city of Spain, because they had always kept peace with the Romans; and he settled there for eight months, till he had killed them all by hunger, and overthrown the city, though the Romans sent their ambassadors to him, and begged that he would leave off the siege. But he so contemptuously slighted them that he would not bear the sight of them in that war, and also in many others. After that, Hannibal showed the malice and the hatred that he swore before his father when he was a boy of nine years old, that he would never become a friend of the Romans.

'When Publius Cornelius and Scipio Publius and Sempronius Longus were consuls,¹ Hannibal rushed in war over the mountains called the Perenei, which are between Gaul and Spain. Afterwards he went over many nations, till he came to the Alpis Mountains and there also rushed over, though he was often withstood, and he worked his way over Mount Jof. So when he came to the bare rock, he caused it to be heated with fire and then to be hewed with mattocks, and with the utmost toil went over the mountains. Of his army there were one thousand² foot and twenty thousand horsemen.

'When he had marched on the level ground till he came to the River Ticinus, then Scipio the consul came against him there and was dangerously wounded, and would also have been slain if his son had not saved him by standing before him³ till he took to flight. There a great slaughter of the Romans was made. Their next battle was at the River Trebia; and again the Romans were beaten and routed.

¹ As is mentioned elsewhere, Alfred only knows two names for each of the Roman consuls, and so makes three consuls here. The reading *Publius* for *Titus* is curious.

² The Latin has "one hundred thousand"; no doubt the "C" has been accidentally omitted in the Anglo-Saxon manuscript.

³ See note on page 111.

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When Sempronius, their other consul, who was gone into Sicily with an army, heard of it, he went thence, and both the consuls came with an army against Hannibal. And their meeting was again at the River Trebia, and the Romans were also put to flight and very much slaughtered, and Hannibal wounded.

‘Afterwards Hannibal went over the mountain Barda,¹ although there was about that time so great a snowstorm that many of the horses perished and all the elephants but one, and the men themselves could hardly bear the cold. But he went boldly over the mountain, chiefly because he knew that Flaminius the consul thought that he might abide without fear in the winter-quarters in which he was then with the army that he had gathered, and undoubtedly thought that there was no one who durst or could begin the journey about that time for the unwonted cold. As soon as Hannibal came to that land, he halted in a secret place near the other army, and sent some of his men throughout the land to burn and to pillage; so that the consul thought that all the troops were spread throughout the land, and were marching thitherward, and thought that he should surprise them in the plundering; and led the army without order, as he knew the other was, till Hannibal came upon him cross-ways with the force that he had together, and slew the consul and twenty-five thousand of the other people, and took six thousand; and two thousand of Hannibal’s people were slain.

213 B.C. ‘When Lucius Amilius and Paulus Publius and Terentius Uarra were consuls,² they marched with an army against Hannibal. But he misled them by the same stratagem as at their former meeting, and also by a new one that they knew not before, which was, that he left some of his people in a strong place and with some he went against the consuls; and as soon as they came together, he fled towards those that were behind, and the consuls followed after him and slew his people, and thought that on that day they should have the greatest victory. But as soon as Hannibal came to his supports, he routed all the consuls, and made so great a slaughter of the Romans as never had been made in one battle, neither before nor since, that was forty-four

¹ Orosius only says *in summo apennino*.

² As before there were the two consuls, Lucius Aemilius Paullus and Publius Terentius Varro.

thousand, and slew two of their consuls and took the third. And on that day he might have come to power over all the Romans if he had gone forward to the city. Afterwards Hannibal sent three bushels of golden rings home to Carthage in token of his victory. By the rings they might know what Roman nobility had fallen, because it was a custom with them in those days that no one might wear a golden ring unless he were of noble kin.

Or. iv. 17; A. iv. 10: 'In the tenth year after Hannibal waged war in Italy, he went from the country of Campania till within three miles of Rome, and encamped by the river called the Annian, to the greatest fear of all the Romans, as from the behaviour of the men it might be understood how frightened and astonished they were when the women ran with stones towards the walls and said they would defend the city if the men durst not. On the next morning Hannibal marched to the city and drew up his army before the gate called Collina. But the consuls did not think themselves so cowardly as the women had before spoken of them, that they durst not defend themselves within the city; but they set themselves in array against Hannibal without the gate. But when they wished to engage, then there came such overwhelming rain that not one of them could wield any weapon, and, therefore, they separated. When the rain ceased they went together again, and again there was another such rain and they again separated. Then Hannibal understood, and said within himself, though he was wishing and hoping for power over the Romans, that God did not grant it.

'Tell me now, O Romans, said Orosius, when or where it came to pass that, before Christianity, either you or others could have rain by praying to any gods, as they could afterwards, since Christianity came, and may now have much good fruit from our Saviour Christ when they have need. It was, however, very evident that the same Christ who afterwards turned them to Christianity sent them that rain as a guard, though they were not worthy of it; to the end that they themselves, and many others through them, might come to Christianity, and to the true belief.' This paragraph should be carefully compared with the literal translation of Orosius's actual words which is given on pages 113, 114.

THE SEVEN BOOKS OF OROSIUS III

OROSIUS ON HANNIBAL

Or. iv. 14; *Ā.* iv. 8: "In the year 534 from the building of Rome, Hannibal, the Emperor of the Poeni, assaulted Saguntum, a very flourishing city of Spain, a friend of the Roman people. Then he surrounded and besieged it. After suffering terribly from famine, and enduring bravely all manner of things worthy and unworthy in reliance on the fidelity they had vowed to the Romans, Hannibal took the city and destroyed it. Ambassadors were sent to him from Rome, but he refused in the most insulting manner even to see them. Thereafter, from the hatred of the Roman name which—though otherwise most unfaithful—he had most faithfully sworn to his father Hamilcar when he was nine years old, he crossed the Pyrenæan mountains in the consulship of Publius Cornelius Scipio and Publius Sempronius Longus, and opened with the sword a way through the most fierce races of the Gauls, and on the ninth day came to the Alps. There he overcame the mountain Gauls, who endeavoured to repel his ascent, and cut away the rocks that blocked his way with fire and iron. He spent four days on the work, and on the fifth day he reached the plain with extreme difficulty. The consul Scipio first met Hannibal, and having joined battle at the River Ticinus was grievously wounded, and was saved from death by his son Scipio, afterwards called Africanus, at that time a mere boy.¹ Almost the whole Roman army was slain there. The same consul then fought at the Trebia [Trevi], and again the Romans were defeated, with like slaughter. The consul Sempronius came back with his army from Sicily when he heard of the fate of his colleague, and met Hannibal at the same river. He lost his army, and escaped almost alone. In that battle Hannibal himself was wounded, and afterwards, when he was crossing into Etruria in early spring, he was overtaken at the summit of the Apennines by a storm, and for two whole days the army was unable to move, shut in and overwhelmed by snow, and frozen. There a vast number of his soldiers, immense numbers of beasts of burden, and almost all the elephants, perished under the bitterness of the cold. But another Scipio, brother of the consul, fought at that time very many

¹ *Prætextatus*, wearing the toga prætexta, the well-born boy's dress. Alfred's quaint guess, 'standing before him,' has been noticed, page 108.

battles in Spain, and defeated and captured Mago, the leader of the Carthaginians. At that time the Romans were terrified by dire prodigies. The orb of the sun was diminished ; the sun and the moon were seen to fight ; shields were seen in the sky ; etc." Alfred places these digressions farther on in his story, and proceeds with Orosius's continuation of the story of Hannibal ; this is a sensible piece of editing. Orosius proceeds thus :

"Hannibal, then, knowing that Flaminius the consul was alone in his camp, set out at the beginning of spring, and in order the quicker to fall upon him unprepared, took the nearer way, through the marshes. The Sarnus had been in great flood, and had left the fields soft and sodden. The thick exhalations from the marsh obscured the way, and Hannibal lost a large part of his forces and of the beasts of burden. He himself, seated on the one elephant which alone had survived, scarcely escaped the dangers of the way. His eye, which had long been diseased, he lost, through the violence of the cold, the watches, the labours, of the expedition. When he got very near the camp of Flaminius, he drew the consul out by devastating the surrounding country. The battle took place at the Trasimene Lake. There the Roman army, most unhappily surrounded by the act of Hannibal, was totally destroyed ; the consul himself was slain ; twenty-five thousand Romans were killed and six thousand taken prisoners. Of the army of Hannibal two thousand were killed.

"Later on, the consuls L. Aemilius Paulus and P. Terentius Varro were sent against Hannibal. Through Varro's impatience almost all hope the Romans had was lost at Cannæ, a town of Apulia. In none of the Punic wars were the Romans brought so near to complete destruction as in that battle, though a great part of Hannibal's army was destroyed. Aemilius the consul fell, twenty men of consular and prætorian rank were slain, thirty senators were taken prisoner or killed, three hundred nobles, forty thousand foot soldiers, and three thousand five hundred horse. Varro with fifty horse fled to Venusium. There can be no doubt that the last day of the Roman State would have come if Hannibal had pressed on to take the city. In token of his victory he sent to Carthage three bushels of golden rings which he had taken off the hands of slaughtered knights and senators. The

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residue of the Romans were in such despair that with the senators they proposed to leave not only Rome, but Italy, and seek a home elsewhere. They were prevented from carrying out their plan by the courage and the threats of Cornelius Scipio the military tribune." Orosius thus places in immediate sequence Hannibal's sending of three hundred bushels of gold rings to Carthage and the conspiracy to abandon Rome in despair after the Battle of Cannæ, where the rings were taken. Livy, of course, mentions both of these events, but he sets them far apart, in two different books, not at all as cause and effect. Dante even does more than follow Orosius against Livy; he couples the two events in one sentence.

Or. iv. 17; A. iv. 10: "In the tenth year after Hannibal came to Italy, he moved his army from Campania, and with great slaughter of all in the Sedicine and Suessanian districts, he came by the Latin way to the River Anio, and encamped within three miles of the city, to the incredible fear of the whole city. The Senate and people trembled with divers fears; the matrons, mad with fear, rushed through the defences, carried stones to the walls, and wildly made as though they would rush out first and fight before the walls. Hannibal came menacing with swift cavalry up to the Colline gate; then drew up all his forces in battle array. The consuls, and Fulvius the proconsul, did not decline to give battle. But when the forces on both sides were set in array, in full sight of Rome the prize of the victor, so terrible a storm of rain and hail burst from the clouds that both armies rushed to their camps, scarce keeping their weapons. When it came fair, they all went out again to make ready for battle, a still more violent and fearful storm burst upon them, overpowered the boldness of man, and drove them terrified to their tents. Hannibal, turned to religious awe, is said to have declared that neither the will nor the power to take Rome was allowed him.

"Now let the opponents of the true God answer me here: Was it Roman courage or Divine pity that prevented Hannibal from taking and uprooting Rome? It may be that the men who were preserved would disdain to allow what Hannibal greatly feared and by his departure showed, that if it is manifest that the Divine protection of rain came from heaven, that rain is provided at opportune and needful times only

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through Christ, Who is the true God. It is certainly known and cannot be denied that when in time of drought, rain is assiduously begged for, and Gentiles and Christians pray for it alternately, it never happens, as the opponents can testify, that the wished-for showers come except on the day on which the Christians are allowed to pray for it to Christ. Hence it is certain, beyond doubt, that the city of Rome by this same true God, Who is Christ Jesus, ordaining all according to the pleasure of His judgment, both was preserved at that time for the sake of the faith to be, and is now being punished because of the unbelieving portion of its inhabitants."

Those continuous extracts from Alfred's version and Orosius's original give a very fair impression of Alfred as a translator and editor and adapter.

CHAPTER V

Good times for ancient Rome were bad times for others—The destruction of Carthage—Malmstone—St. Aldhelm and Malmesbury—Alfred's misunderstandings of Orosius.

OROSIUS wrote a preface to each of the seven books of his History, in the guise of a first chapter. Alfred only notices one of these prefatory chapters. It is in itself well worthy of notice ; and as it follows immediately on the passage we have been considering, Alfred's short summary of its argument may be given here. It is the opening of Book V of *Orosius*, and Alfred makes his summary the first chapter of his own Fifth Book. Orosius on this occasion himself speaks in the first person, *Scio*. Alfred takes it up with the same word.

Or. v. 1 ; A. v. 1 : ' I know, quoth Orosius, what the boast of the Romans chiefly is, that they have overcome many nations and have often driven many kings before their triumphs. These are the good times of which they always boast ; as if they said that these times were given to them only, and not to all people. But if they could rightly understand they might know that they were common to all nations. If they say that those times were good because they made that one city wealthy, then may they more truly say that the times were the most unhappy, because through the riches of that one city all the others were made poor.

' If they do not believe this, let them then ask the Italians,¹ their own countrmen, how they liked those times, when they were slain, and kept down, and sold into other lands, for one hundred and twenty years.

' If they do not believe them, then let them ask the Spaniards, who were bearing the same for two hundred years, and many other nations ; and also many kings, how they liked it when they drove them in yokes and in chains before

¹ Orosius took first the miseries of Carthage as an example of the unhappiness of times, but Alfred evidently thought he had said enough about that city in his previous chapter.

their triumphs towards Rome for their own glory, and afterwards they lay in prison until they died. And they harassed many kings, to the end that they should give all that they then had for their wretched life. But their unrest is unknown to us, and not to be believed, because we are born in that peace which they could hardly buy with their life. It was after Christ was born that we were loosed from all slavery, and from all fear, if we will follow Him.'

That is the whole of Alfred's summary of a long prefatory chapter. With reference to his concluding sentence, Orosius said only that the people of his time were born and grew to old age in quiet and ease such as they only very slightly enjoyed in the time following the empire of Cæsar and the birth of Christ.

Orosius has some very interesting remarks on the destruction of Carthage, with a direct application to a false charge laid at the door of Christianity which King Alfred either misunderstood or rendered in an unusually pointless fashion.

Orosius tells that there was a division of opinion as to whether Carthage should be destroyed after the conquest by Scipio, 146 B.C. On one side it was urged that if Carthage was utterly destroyed, there would be peace from that quarter, no more Punic Wars. On the other side it was argued that if there was a permanent absence of anxiety from the African coast, the Romans would become slack, would lose their energy. Why, Orosius asked the Romans, why should they attribute to Christianity their slackness and dullness, outwardly fat, empty within, when they had themselves destroyed the great whetstone of splendour and energy which Carthage had for six hundred years been to them? He would there end his remarks, lest if he too vigorously pressed the whetstone to get rid of the rust, he should fail to get the edge sharp, and find abnormal hardness in the stone. Not that he would be afraid of the abnormal hardness if he had hope of getting a good edge.

The two renderings of Alfred's corresponding passage, published in the middle of last century, agree almost word for word. We may take Dr. Bosworth's rendering.

'The Romans had a long consultation, whether it was more desirable for them to destroy the city of Carthage, that they might ever after have peace on that side, or that they

should let it stand, to the end that war might again arise from thence, because they dreaded, if they did not sometimes wage war, that they would too soon become drowsy and slothful. So that to you, Romans, it is now again made known, since Christianity has come, that ye have lost the whetstone of your elders, of your wars, of your bravery; for ye are now fat without and lean within; but your elders were lean without and fat within, of a strong and firm mind. I also know not, said he, how useful I may be at the time that I speak these words, but that I may lose my pains. It is also desirable that a man briskly rub the softest malmstone, if he think of making it the best whetstone. So that it is now very difficult for me to whet their mind, since it will be neither sharp nor hard.'

Alfred's word *malmstone* is curious. Dr. Bosworth quotes from the manuscript notes of Dr. Ingram, the President of Trinity College, Oxford, written in his copy of *Orosius*, thus:

"There is a kind of stone, which is still called in Wiltshire *malmstone*, of which there is a great abundance in that county, a county well known to King Alfred, the theatre of his most glorious battles."

The malmstone of North Wilts has probably a purely local tradition at its back, and a very interesting tradition, preferable on all accounts to any supposed connexion with Dutch and German words suggesting sands, or pulverizable stone. Malmesbury is supposed to be a late form of Aldhelm's-bury, but nearly twenty years ago I pointed out that it is the original form of the West Saxon name. St. Aldhelm was first cousin to Alfred's ancestor Eoppa, in the fifth generation before Alfred, and the King, as we know, had regard for Aldhelm's gifts, and treasured his memory. Aldhelm was the pupil and the successor of Maildubh, the original Irish teacher of the school of learning at the retired place of strength in the great forests which we now call Malmesbury. The Irishman would call his pupil dear Aldhelm, and that would in his mouth be "Mallem," as Monenn was dear Ninian, Mogue was Mo-ædh-og, Mucuruna was dear Corona, Mochuda was dear Cuda, Mocholmoc was Mo-Colum-og, dear little Colman. If I have been right in the suggestion¹ that Maildubh was one of Carthach's learned monks who migrated from Rahan to Lismore, he would be personally familiar with

¹ "St. Aldhelm" (S.P.C.K., 1903), pp. 47 and 75.

the two examples last given of the ordinary use of the prefix Mo, M' before a vowel. Aldhelm's name is to this day specially associated with the beautiful white stone of North Wilts. The tradition is that Aldhelm rode out from Malmesbury on horseback, to look for building-stone for his new stone church. At a certain spot, he drew off his gauntlet, flung it on the ground, and said "dig there." They dug, and found the stone. To this day the gauntlet and Aldhelm are the trade-marks for those quarries. It is pleasant to think that the malmstone of Alfred, pronounced, of course, in its fullest sounds, as mallestone, was to the King the "dear Aldhelm stone," the stone which his far-back collateral ancestor first used for his ecclesiastical buildings, and that the affectionate name has through all these centuries stuck to the stone.

It may be added that it is certain that the prefix M was attached to Aldhelm's name when used in the name of the borough. Besides the forms Maildubiensis ecclesia, Maldubeshurg, Maldulfeshurg, all from the Irish teacher's name, we have the name Ealdelmesbyrig, from Aldhelm, and Mealdelmesbyrig, Maldelmesburuh, from Aldhelm's name with the affectionate M attached. The full spelling of the name, Aldhelm, would in accordance with Irish practice be pronounced Allelm.

Many curious examples could be given of Alfred's misunderstanding Orosius. A palmary example is found in the opening of the fourth chapter of Alfred's Fifth Book, *Orosius* v. 10.

Or. v. 10 ; A. v. 4 : Orosius states that P. Licinius Crassus, consul and *pontifex maximus*, was sent with an excellently equipped army against Aristonicus, the brother of Attalus, who had invaded that part of Asia which had been left by will to the Romans, and the consul was aided also by great kings, Nicomedes of Bithynia, Mithridates of Pontus and Armenia, Ariarathes of Cappadocia, Pylæmenes of Paphlagonia, and their large armies. That is, four kings from five kingdoms. In all, nine names.

Alfred appears to have regarded eight of these names as names of the kingdoms from which the kings came. The ninth name, Mithridates, was too well known to him as the name of a king, and that name is accordingly omitted. He renders the passage thus :

‘Many kings from many lands came to help Crassus. One was from Nicomedia, another from Bithinia, a third from Ponto, a fourth from Armenia, a fifth from Argeate, a sixth from Cappadocia, a seventh from Filimine, an eighth from Paflogoniam.’

Dr. Bosworth marks Argeate with a query. It may be suggested that the Anglo-Saxon *g* was often pronounced as *y*, as in *yea* and *year*, and Aryate is a reasonable rendering of Ariarathes.

The other manuscript reads the numbering first, second, third, etc., as one, two, three, etc., and thus gives us ‘one from Nicomedia, two from Bithinia, three from Ponto, . . . , eight from Paflogoniam,’ thirty-six kings in all.

The oblique cases of names presented great difficulties to the King. He takes them frequently as they stand. For example, *regis Ponthionis* is rendered ‘of King Ponthionis.’

In many cases Alfred’s translations miss the evident meaning of the Latin. The curious passage in which he understands the Roman censors to be gods contains remarkable mistakes.

A. iv. 12 : ‘In those days the gods of the Romans gave orders in the Senate to build them a theatre for plays. But Scipio often sent orders home that they should not begin it, and also when he came home from Spain he himself said that it would be the greatest folly and the greatest mistake. Then the Romans, by his chiding and by his teaching, would not listen to the gods ; and all the money that they had there gathered together, which they would have given for the pillars and for the work, they gave for other things. Now may those Christians be ashamed who love and follow such idolatry, when he so much scorned it who was not a Christian and should have furthered it according to their own custom.’

The original is as follows :

Or. iv. 21 : “At that time the censors decreed that a theatre be built of stone in the city. Scipio Nasica opposed the building in a very weighty speech, saying that it would be most inimical for a warrior people, as leading to slothfulness and lasciviousness. He so moved the Senate, that they not only ordered that all the things prepared for the theatre should be sold, but they even prohibited the provision of seats for the spectators of the games.”

CHAPTER VI

Britain in Orosius and in Alfred—The coming of the Prince of Peace—
Pilate and Tiberius—Caligula, Claudius, St. Peter at Rome—Titus and
the *Saxon Chronicle*—Dante—The Roman army in Germany—Arius—
Alfred charged with understating the misdeeds of Germanic tribes—
Rome taken by the Gauls—Mildness of Alaric—The basilicas of St. Peter
and St. Paul—Rhadagaisus—The *De Civitate Dei* and the sack of Rome
—Orosius's dedication to Augustine.

WE might have fitly concluded our examination of Orosius's Latin history and the Saxon version by a brief inquiry into the mentions of our own island which we find in them. The very natural hope that we shall find a good deal of British detail added by Alfred from local knowledge or tradition is sadly disappointed. Our first quotation has this special interest for us, that Bede took the substance of the second chapter of his First Book from this chapter of Orosius.

Or. vi. 9; A. v. 12: 'The Romans gave Caius Julius seven legions, to the end that he might wage war five years on the Gauls. When he had overcome them he went into the island Britain, and fought against the Britons, and was routed in the land which is called Kentland. Soon afterwards he fought again with the Britons in Kentland, and they were routed. Their third battle was near the river which is called Thames, near the ford called Wallingford. After that battle the king came into his hands, and the townspeople that were in Cirencester, and afterwards all that were in the land.'

The "Centland," and "Welinga ford," and "Cyrnceastre," are Alfred's local contributions. The King leaves out all the rest of the story which has such fascinating interest for us, as told by Julius Cæsar himself and summarized by Orosius at considerable length. This curious omission can only be accounted for by the fact that Bede told the story in his *Ecclesiastical History*, and Alfred had included it there.

Or. vii. 15; A. vi. 15. Orosius here tells of the serious

fighting which Severus had to go through in Britain. He determined that his only course was to shut out the barbarians from the districts civilized by the Romans. He therefore carried from sea to sea, thirty-two miles, a great trench with a very firm vallum strengthened by frequent towers. And there he died, at York.

Alfred is disappointing. He does, however, tell us who the barbarians were.

‘Severus afterwards went into Britain, and often fought there against the Picts and Scots,¹ before he could defend the Britons against them. He ordered a wall to be built quite across all that country from sea to sea. Soon afterwards he died in the city of Eofer-wic.’

Or. vii. 24, 25 ; A. vi. 30. Alfred by this time nearly comes to an end of his work, and he omits wholesale from his author. He only tells us here that ‘Constantine, the most merciful man, went into Britain and died there ; and gave the empire to Constantine his son, whom he had by Helena his concubine.’

We naturally turn with great interest to the remarks of Orosius on the coming of the Prince of Peace, and the treatment of his remarks by King Alfred.

Or. vi. 22 ; A. v. 15 : ‘Then the doors of Janus were again shut, and his locks rusty, as they never were before. In the same year that all this came to pass, which was in the forty-second year of the reign of Augustus, He was born Who brought peace to all the world, that is, Our Lord Jesus Christ.’

Orosius ends his Sixth Book thus :

Or. vi. 22 : I have not been silent on the subject of the sins of men from the beginning and the punishments of men for their sins. In my Seventh Book I shall show what persecutions the Christians have suffered, and what vengeance have followed, beyond the general fact that all are prone to sin and are individually punished.

Alfred renders this curiously otherwise, committing Orosius to what he certainly did not say :

A. v. 15 : ‘Quoth Orosius : I have told you how, from

¹ Peohtas and Sceottas.

the beginning of this world, all mankind paid for the first man's sins with great pains and torments. I will also now further tell what mercy and gentleness there have been since Christianity came—just as if the hearts of men were changed because the former things had been atoned for.'

Adam's sin and Christ's Atonement were very prominent in Alfred's mind. In his religious scheme, all the evil of the world came from the one, all the good from the other.

Or. vii. 4: Orosius tells us that after the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, Pilate informed Tiberius of those events, and reported that many knew of the miracles which Christ had Himself performed and His followers in His name, and very many believed that Christ was a God. Tiberius reported it with great approbation to the Senate and proposed that Christ should be recognized as a God. The Senate held that the proposal for adopting the cult of a new deity should have come from them; they refused to accept the proposal of Tiberius; and made an edict that Christians were to be driven out of the city. Tiberius had up to that time been the most moderate and excellent of princes, much beloved. Thenceforth he became what history has described. All this Alfred included, as also the other mention of Pilate which we find in Orosius, in the time of Caligula. Alfred reports it thus:

A. vi. 3: 'In those days the wrath of God came upon the Jews¹ so that they had disagreement both among themselves and with all nations; although it was chiefly in the city of Alexandria, and Caius ordered them to be driven out. They then sent Philo, their most learned man, to the end that he might ask the mercy of God for them. But he sadly intreated them for that wish, and commanded that they should be oppressed on every side where they could, and ordered that they should fill the temple at Jerusalem with idols and should set his own idol there in the midst, which was his own image.² He held Pilate in threatening until he stabbed himself. Pilate had doomed Our Lord to death.'

It is unnecessary to point out the wide difference between

¹ Alfred curiously omits to represent Orosius's words *ob passionem Christi meritis ubique cladibus exagitabantur*.

² *Seque ibi ut deum colit praecepit*.

this and the usually accepted story of the later days of Pilate.

Or. vii. 4 ; A. vi. 2 : 'Tiberius the emperor succeeded to the government after Augustus. He was so forgiving and so mild to the Romans, as no ruler had ever been to them before, until Pilate sent him word from Jerusalem about the miracles of Christ, and about His martyrdom, and also that many took Him for a god. But when he told it to the Senate, they all very much withstood him, because they had not been told of it sooner, as it was a custom with them, that they might afterwards make it known to all the Romans ; and said they would not have Him for a god. Then Tiberius was as wroth and as hard with the Romans as he before had been mild and easy to them, so that he hardly left alive one of the senators, nor of the twenty-two men whom he had chosen to help him, that they should be his advisers, whom they called patricians. All these but two he ordered to be put to death : yea, his own two sons.

'In the twelfth year of the reign of Tiberius, God's wrath was again upon the Romans,¹ while they were in their theatre at their plays, when it all fell down and killed twenty thousand of them. They then perished by a deserved wrath, said Orosius, when they should have rued their sins and amended their deeds, rather than go to their plays as their custom was before Christianity.

'In the eighteenth year of his reign, when Christ was crucified, there was great darkness over all the world, and so great an earthquake that many stones fell from mountains ; and what was the greatest wonder, when the moon was full, and farthest from the sun, that it was then eclipsed.'

Or. vii. 6 ; A. vi. 4 : 'Tiberius Claudius succeeded. In the first year of his reign, Peter the Apostle came to Rome, and men first became Christians there through his teaching. The Romans then wished to put Claudius to death for the deeds of his kinsman, Caius,² the former emperor, and all that were of that family. But when they embraced Christianity, they were so mild and so peaceable, that they all forgave the emperor the mischief that he had formerly done ;

¹ The people of Fidenæ, five miles from Rome.

² Orosius says that after the slaughter of Caligula the Senate and Consuls decreed the restoration of the Republic and the destruction of the whole family of the Cæsars.

and he forgave all of them the wrong and injury that they thought of doing to him.

'At that time, when Christianity had come to them, there was also, in the government of the Romans, another token, which was that the Dalmatians wished to give their kingdom to Scribonianus their general, and then to wage war against the Romans. But when they were gathered together, and wished to make him king, they could not raise the standard, as was their custom when they settled governments; they were angry with themselves that they had ever begun it, and put Scribonianus to death. Now, said Orosius,¹ let him say who will or who dares, that that undertaking was not stopped for the good of Christianity, and say where, before Christianity, any war, if it were begun, took such a turn.'

The mention of Titus by Orosius has two very interesting connexions, the one with Alfred and the *Saxon Chronicle*, the other with Dante.

Or. vii. 10; A. vi. 8: To take the case of Alfred and the *Chronicle*² first. Orosius tells us that when the early death of Titus came, after only two years of empire, there was great grief among the people. Alfred's version does not say this, but tells instead a charming little saying of Titus, not to be found in *Orosius*. This was a much more graphic way of putting his goodness before us. 'He was of so good a disposition, that he said he lost the day on which he did not do any good.'

To connect this with the *Saxon Chronicle*, we must take Alfred's Saxon version, 'He wæs swa godes willan thæt he sæde thæt he forlure thone dæg the he noht on to gode ne gedyde.' Turning to the six best manuscripts of the *Saxon Chronicle* printed in parallel columns by Mr. Thorpe, we find in all of them under the year 81 just that entry, with slight dialectic differences, such as *naht* for *noht*. There is no other entry between the years 72 and 84. The best manuscript (Corpus Christi, Cambridge) has the exact words of Alfred in more emphatic order, "he said that he that day lost on which etc." Neither Alfred, as we have seen, nor any other compiler of the *Chronicle*, could have got it from Orosius. The conviction that the compiler entered it in the *Chronicle* from

¹ Orosius does not say what Alfred says he says. He says that the destruction of Scribonianus was wrought on account of the arrival of the Apostle Peter, and to secure the safety of the infant Church.

² See Dr. Plummer's edition of Professor Earle's *Saxon Chronicle*, I. cvi.

Alfred's own Saxon addition to Orosius seems to be sure. Alfred may himself have got it from Isidore, but there was no Saxon version of Isidore for the *Chronicle* to quote.

The connexion with Dante turns on another point, and has, of course, no Saxon bearing. In Orosius's chapter on the birth of Christ (vii. 3), we read that Titus took Jerusalem and destroyed it, and slew so many Jews that their race was extinct, all as the prophets had foretold. And this was because he was raised up by God to avenge the blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We find in the *Purgatorio*, xxi. 82-84 :

*Il buon Tito con l'aiuto
Del sommo Rege vendico le fora,
Ond' uscì il sangue per Giuda venduto.¹*

And in the *Paradiso*, vi. 92, 93 :

*Poscia con Tito a far vendetta corse
Della vendetta del peccato antico.²*

Corse, sc. *l'aquila Romana*. The destruction of Jerusalem by Titus was the vengeance upon the Jews for the crucifixion of Christ, whereby Adam's sin was avenged.

Or. vii. 15 ; A. vi. 13 : Orosius dwells upon a remarkable event in the time of Marcus Antonius, which Alfred treats very briefly, and not adequately, as follows :

'Then there came upon the Romans the Danish War, with all the Germans. On the very day on which they would fight, there came so great a heat and so great a thirst upon them that they had no hope of their lives. Then they understood that it was from God's wrath, and asked the Christians that they would in some way help them. Then they prayed to Almighty God, and it rained so much that they had water enough upon the plain ; and there came such heavy thunder that it killed many thousand men in the midst of the battle.'

The story is told very differently by Orosius. The Roman forces were in the territory of the Quadi, the Moravia of to-day. They were surrounded by the innumerable hosts of the enemy, almost the whole of Germany. The want of water was an almost greater danger than the hostile array.

¹ What time the good Titus with help of the Highest King avenged the wounds whence came the blood by Judas sold.

² Thereafter, under Titus, to wreak vengeance on the vengeance on the ancient sin it (the Roman eagle, *Paradiso*, vi. 32) rushed.

"Suddenly, with great firmness of faith, certain soldiers poured themselves into prayer, making invocation of the name of Christ. So great a flood of rain came that the Romans were completely refreshed, but the enemy were so terrified by a tremendous thunderstorm, which killed very many of them, that they turned and fled. The Romans pursued, and gained a victory more glorious than the victories of ancient days. They were few in number and ill-equipped, but they had the mighty help of Christ."

Or. vii. 28 ; A. vi. 30 : Here Orosius dwells at length upon the wickedness of Arrius (Arius) and his heresy. Alfred is not stirred to strong language. 'Arius the mass-priest fell into a mistake about the right belief.'

We have now come to the times of Orosius himself, and to the story of the sacking of Rome, and with this our account of Orosius' and of Alfred's *Orosius* must end. These concluding chapters affect Alfred directly, for he has been accused of concealing or moderating the misdeeds—as related by Orosius—of the Germanic tribes, his own race as it were, in comparison with the Gauls.

It should be remembered that in more than one important passage Orosius himself draws comparisons between Gauls and Goths very much in favour of the barbarian Goths as contrasted with the barbarian Gauls. One such passage closes the Second Book of Orosius, where he not only brings out the fact that the Gauls had behaved very much worse than the Goths, but declares that the action of the Goths was exemplary, and in itself worthy of praise. The passage itself must be given here.

Writing of the time when the Gauls sacked Rome 'as if one were mowing a meadow,' Alfred proceeds :

Or. ii. 19 ; A. ii. 8 : 'I ween, quoth Orosius, that not any man can tell the harm which was done to the Romans at that time, even if they had not burned the city as they then did. The few that were left there gave a thousand pounds of gold for their lives ; and they did that chiefly because they thought that they should afterwards be their subjects.¹ Some fled into that fastness which they called Capitolium. They beset these, till some of them died of hunger, others fell into their hands, and they afterwards sold them to other people for money.

¹ Alfred here misunderstands Orosius.

‘How, quoth Orosius, does it now seem to you who slander the times of Christianity? After the Gauls went out of the city, then what joyful times the Romans had! when the wretches who were left there crept out of the holes in which they lurked, and so wailed as if they had come from the other world, when they looked around upon the burnt and wasted city, so that where they formerly had the greatest joy they then had peculiar dread. Besides this evil, they had neither food within nor friend without. These were the times after which the Romans now sigh, saying that the Goths have made worse times than they had before, although the Goths only plundered them for three days, and the Gauls plundered and burned for six months, and as though they thought they had not done harm enough unless they took away their name that they be no more a people. Moreover, the Goths, for the honour of Christianity and through the fear of God, plundered there a less time and neither burned the city nor had the wish to take from them their name, nor would they harm any of those who had fled to the House of God, though there should be heathens among them, but would much rather settle among them in peace. In former times scarce any could flee away, or hide themselves from the Gauls. When the Goths plundered them, for a little while, one could only hear of few being slain.’

That is Alfred’s representation of what Orosius wrote. Not only does Alfred not suppress any syllable of blame to the Goths, he does not give them the detailed praise which Orosius gives. And he omits many little touches which we might have supposed that his visit to Rome in his early youth would have led him to quote, such as the statement that Alaric chiefly named the basilica of St. Peter and the basilica of St. Paul as the sacred places to which those who wished to be safe should flee for refuge.¹

It is true that Orosius paints in the very darkest colours the conduct of Alaric’s fellow-king Rhadagaisus, as also does Augustine in his *City of God* (v. 23). Orosius describes him as of all ancient or recent enemies of Rome the most cruel, thirsting to propitiate his gods with the blood of the Roman race, as was the way of barbarians of that type. Orosius gives a detailed and terrible account of the overthrow of this

¹ Or. vii. 39. Alaric broke into the city, having first issued an order *ut si qui in sancta loca præcipueque in sanctorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli basilicas confugissent, hos imprimis inviolatos securosque esse sinerent.*

monster of cruelty. But in this part of the history Alfred is drawing very near the end of his effort. He omits whole chapters of Orosius which carry the history on through times of great confusion, where succinct epitome is practically impossible. If Alfred is to be blamed for continuing to exercise his principle of epitomizing when he comes to tell of the Goths, it should be remembered that Orosius has been blamed for a special grudge against the barbarians who were Christians, by reason of the fact that he regarded them as Arian heretics.

After all, is there any very unfair dealing on Alfred's part in his epitome of the action of Rhadagaisus and of Alaric with which he brings his history to a sudden end? The last two chapters of his book (vi. 37 and 38) certainly do not spare Rhadagaisus, as we shall see.

Or. vii. 37; A. vi. 37: 'Stilico wished to displace Honorius for his own son. And because of this fiendish feeling, he left the Goths in Italy, with their two kings Alaric and Rhadagaisus, and thought, when the people were overcome, that they would afterwards do all that he wished. He hoped also that he could soon keep back the Goths from the war, because he was born in their land. Shortly afterwards, Alaric became a Christian, and Rhadagaisus remained a heathen, and daily sacrificed to idols by slaying men, and he was always most pleased if they were Romans.

'Even now it may shame you Romans, said Orosius, that ye should have had so mean a thought, for fear of one man, and for one man's sacrificing, as when ye said that the heathen times were better than the Christian, and also that it were better for yourselves to forsake Christianity and take to the heathen customs which your elders formerly followed. Ye may also think how worthless he afterwards was, in his sacrifices and in his idolatry in which he lived, when ye had him bound and then treated him as ye would, and all his army which as ye yourselves said was two hundred thousand, yet not one of you was wounded.'

A. vi. 38: 'God showed His mercy to the Romans when He allowed their misdeeds to be avenged, and yet it was done by Alaric, the most Christian and the mildest of kings. He sacked Rome with so little violence that he ordered that no one should be slain, and that nothing should be taken away or injured that was in the churches. Soon after that,

on the third day, they went out of the city of their own accord ; so there was not a single house burnt by their order.'

Augustine himself had vehemently urged the point that Alaric's sack of Rome had features entirely at variance with the received custom of sacking a city. He called attention to the fact that Cæsar had in his history of his wars described the practice of sack, with no one redeeming feature. The list of horrors is terrible. Augustine's special point was that "temples" were named among the buildings to be destroyed, whereas Alaric declared that not only the churches, but everything and every one in them should be spared ; thus not dealing out to the Romans the brutalities they inflicted on conquered towns. He opens the sixth chapter of his First Book of the *De Civitate Dei* thus :

"Therefore all the spoil, murder, burning, violence, and affliction, that in this fresh calamity fell upon Rome, were nothing but the ordinary effects following the custom of war. But that which was so unaccustomed, that the savage nature of the barbarians should put on a new shape and appear so merciful that it would make choice of great and spacious churches to fill with such as it meant to show pity on, from which none should be hailed to slaughter or to slavery, in which none should be hurt, to which many by their courteous foes should be conducted and out of which none should be led into bondage, this is due to the name of Christ, this is due to the Christian profession ; he that seeth not this is blind, he that seeth it and praiseth it not is thankless, he that hinders him that praiseth it is mad."

Or. vii. 43. At the end of the last chapter of his seventh and last book, vii. 43, which with 41 and 42 Alfred does not notice, Orosius says : "By the help of Christ and in accordance with thy precept, most blessed father Augustine, I have described, as briefly and simply as I could, the evil desires and the punishments of sinful men, the conflicts of the world, the judgments of God, from the beginning of the world to this present time, namely, for 5618 years."

THE PASTORAL CARE OF GREGORY THE GREAT

CHAPTER I

The Anglo-Saxon manuscripts—Early English Text Society's edition—
The excised leaf—A third manuscript—Copies prepared for Anglo-
Saxon bishops—The Latin text and Canon Bramley's translation—A
Greek translation lost—The covering letter—The recent dearth of
learned clergy—Alfred's reason for translating books into Anglo-Saxon—
A copy to each See, with an *æstel*—Alfred's poetic outburst of poem—
The Dream of the Holy Rood.

WE have two manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon version of Gregory's *Pastoral Care* which were written in Alfred's lifetime. The only other of his books which we have in a manuscript written in the King's lifetime is the *Orosius*.

Mr. Henry Sweet published the Anglo-Saxon text and a translation of it into English in two volumes of the Early English Text Society's original series. The first volume, of 288 pages, was published in 1871 as No. 45; the second (No. 50) contains pages 289 to 469. Pages 1 to 381 give the texts of two of the manuscripts; the remaining pages give only one text, the later parts of the other text having been destroyed by fire.

The manuscript which gives the whole text is known as the Hatton MS. It is a square quarto of the end of the ninth century, that is, of Alfred's own time, preserved in the Bodleian Library (Hatton 20), and entire, except that a single leaf has been cut out. This excision occurs in Chapter 33, "That the impatient are to be admonished in one way, the patient in another." On the face of it, we should not expect that Gregory's treatment of that heading would set forth anything which could rouse so much opposition in a reader's mind that he would cut out the leaf. And when we read in the other manuscript what this leaf contained, this presumption grows stronger. It is a fine lauda-

tion of the virtue of patience. The first lines of the excised leaf would contain the words "better is the patient than the strong and bold man; and stronger and bolder is he who overcomes and subdues his own mind than he who takes a strong city." Further on we have, "Let the impatient hear what Truth said to his elect; he said: In your patience ye shall hold your souls; and again, Let the impatient hear another passage about them, spoken in the books of Solomon: The impatient fool reveals all his thoughts, but the wise man delays it, and waits his time; and again, Therefore St. Paul said: Love is patient, and soon after he said: It is mild." But towards the end of the leaf the reasoning takes a different turn. St. Paul is quoted as saying, Dismiss all evil from your hearts; and Gregory proceeds: "It is useless for a man to dismiss indignation, and blame, and clamour, externally, if evil will, which is the mother of all evil, controls the heart; for it is useless for a man to lop off the boughs of any evil, without cutting off the root of the trunk. Therefore Truth spoke through itself: Love your enemies, and do well to those who formerly hated you, and pray for those who persecute you and do you harm. With men it is a great merit to be able to bear with an enemy, but it is a much greater one to be able with God to love him afterwards." We may be permitted to wonder whether the pagan Danes had produced in some inner mind the sort of feeling which at the time of this present writing (November 19, 1918) the ordinary Englishman has towards the Germans, whose war prisoners, shattered by months of cruelty, are now tottering homewards without food or clothing.

It is this Hatton MS. that opens with the words, "This book is for Worcester. Alfred king bids greet Wærferth bishop."

The original of the other manuscript published by Mr. Sweet was the Cotton MS. Tiberius B. xi in the British Museum. It was a large quarto, of the same age as the Bodleian MS., that is, of Alfred's own time. It contained only the first forty-nine of the sixty-five chapters of the work. It was injured in the great fire in 1731, restored and rebound, and burnt again in a fire at the bookbinder's. The manuscript was copied by Junius in the seventeenth century, and his copy is now in the Bodleian.

These two main manuscripts of Alfred's own time agree closely, so far as their handwriting is concerned, with that of

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the first part of the Parker MS. of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which ends with the year 891.

There is in the British Museum a small folio of the *Pastoral Care*, Cotton Otho B. ii, apparently of the beginning of the tenth century, which was burned in the Cottonian fire, but has been partially restored and rebound. About half of it is more or less legible. It had lost the last two folios before the fire.

Mr. Sweet describes the text which he prints along with the Hatton text as that of the "Cotton MSS."

In one and another of the manuscripts several bishops are named as having had copies prepared for them by the king, namely, Plegmund, archbishop; Swithulf, bishop; Wærferth, bishop; Heahstan, bishop; Wulfsig, bishop (Corpus Christi College, Cambridge).

There are interesting points in these manuscripts connected with the question of Alfred's procedure in the preparation of the translation, and its multiplication, and its issue copy by copy to archbishop and bishops. The reader who desires to look into this question will find Mr. Sweet's discussion of it in his Introduction. The Introduction is rather likely to be missed, as it lurks at the beginning of the second volume.

The original Latin of the *Pastoral Care* will be found in the Benedictine edition of the works of Gregory the Great, at the beginning of the second volume, Paris, 1705. A translation into French had been published in Paris in 1694. The late Canon Bramley printed the Latin text in a very handy little volume, with an excellent translation into English, reprinted in 1908, James Parker and Co., Oxford.

Gregory divides his *Pastoral Care* into four books. Alfred, as in his *Boethius*, runs the whole into one, numbering the chapters from 1 to 65. The Latin has in all sixty-three chapters. The Prologue of Book III and the list of contents of that Book counted as a chapter with Alfred; and he split the remainder of Gregory's first chapter of Book III into his two chapters 24 and 25.

While it is clear that the *Pastoral Care* is a clergy book, not a layman's book like the *Dialogues*, the Benedictine editors very truly say in their Preface that the usefulness of the *Pastoral Care* reaches much further than to bishops and others with cure of souls; it is helpful and instructive for all Christians, especially for such as have charge of families.

They probably refer to ecclesiastical families, or communities. They proceed to inform us that the Emperor Maurice, who had obtained this book from the Deacon Anatolius and was greatly pleased with it, put it into the hands of Anastasius, the Bishop of Antioch, to be translated into Greek and published. The holy Doctor took this ill, being as exceptionally modest as he was learned. The editors add that we have to lament the loss of this Greek Version of the *Pastoral Care*. They believe that even in the ninth century it had been lost to memory; because Photius, who had in his library the Greek Version of Gregory's *Dialogues* produced by Zecharias, and highly praised it, makes no mention of a Greek translation of the *Pastoral Care*.

King Alfred appears to have sent a letter to the bishop of each Cathedral Church, in sending to him a copy of the Anglo-Saxon rendering of Gregory's *Pastoral Care*. The following letter is taken from the copy sent to Bishop Wærferth of Worcester, now in the Bodleian Library. Besides this copy of the book, we have the copies sent to Plegmund the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Wulfsige the Bishop of Sherborne.

‘Alfred king biddeth greet Wærferth bishop with his words in loving and friendly wise: and I would have you informed that it has often come into my remembrance what wise men there formerly were among the Angle race, both of the sacred orders and the secular; and how happy times there were throughout the Angle race; and how the kings who had the government of the folk in those days obeyed God and His messengers; and they on the one hand maintained their peace and their customs and their authority within their borders, while at the same time they spread their authority outwards; and how it then went well with them both in war and in wisdom; and likewise the sacred orders, how earnest they were, as well about teaching as about learning, and about all the services that they owed to God; and how people from abroad came to this land for wisdom and instruction; and how we now should have to get them abroad if we were going to have them. | So clean was it fallen away in the Angle race, that there were very few on this side Humber who would know how to render their service in English, or just read off an epistle out of Latin into English; and I ween that not many would be

on the other side Humber. So few of them were there that I cannot think of so much as a single one south of Thames when I took to the realm. God Almighty be thanked that we have now any teachers in office. Therefore I command thee to do as I believe thou art willing, to disengage thyself from worldly matters as often as may be, that thou mayest apply the wisdom which God has given thee wherever thou canst.¹ Consider what punishment would come upon us on account of this world, if we neither loved wisdom ourselves ²⁷ nor suffered other men to obtain it: we should have the name only of Christian, and very few of the virtues.'

Moreover, the King called also to mind what he had himself seen in his early days, before all the harryings and burnings of recent times: how the churches of England had been well stored with books, and the clergy were numerous, but they had profited little by the books, because they could not understand them, as they were not written in their own language. [At this point his eloquence rises to a dramatic pitch; he breaks out—'It is as if they had said: Our ancestors, who were the masters of these sacred places, they loved wisdom, and by means of it they acquired wealth and left it to us. Here may yet be seen their traces, but we are not able to walk in their steps, forasmuch as we have now lost both the wealth and the wisdom, because we were not willing to bend our minds to that pursuit.' Remembering all this, he had marvelled very exceedingly at those good scholars who were once so frequent in England, men who had so completely mastered the Latin books, that they had not been willing to translate any part of them into their own language. But he soon answered himself and said that they never could have foreseen the present utter decay, and it was their very zeal for learning which caused them to abstain from translating, because they thought that the path of education and knowledge lay through the study of languages. He proceeds,

'Then I remembered how the law of Moses was first known in Hebrew; and later, when the Greeks had learned it, they translated it into their own language, and all other books too. And later still the Latin people in the same manner, they, by means of wise interpreters, translated all the books

¹ Even of the famous scholar Aldhelm, 200 years before, it was said that when he became bishop he was absorbed, as the manner of bishops was, in the secular cares of his position.

into their own speech. And so also did all the other Christian nations translate some portions of (the books) into their own speech.

'Therefore to me it seemeth better, if it seemeth so to you, that we also some books, those that most needful are for all men to be acquainted with, that ¹ we turn those into the speech which we all can understand; and that ye do as we very easily may with God's help, if we have the requisite peace, that all the youth which now is in England of free men, of those who have the means to be able to go in for it, be set to learning, while they are fit for no other business, until such time as they can thoroughly read English writing: afterwards further instruction may be given in the Latin language to such as are intended for a more advanced education, and are to be prepared for higher office. As I then reflected how the teaching of the Latin language had recently decayed throughout this people of the Angles, and yet many could read English writing, then began I among other various and manifold businesses of this kingdom to turn into English the book that is called *Pastoralis* in Latin, and *Hierdebooc* (Shepherding Book) in English, whiles word for word, whiles sense for sense, just as I heard it of Plēgmund the archbishop, and of Asser my bishop, and of Grimbald my mass-priest, and of John my mass-priest. After I had learned it so that I understood it and could render it with fullest meaning, I translated it into English; and to each See in my kingdom I will send one; and on each there is an æstel ² which is of the value of 50 mancuses. And I command in the name of God that no man remove the æstel from the book, nor the book from the minster. No one knows how long such learned bishops may be there as now, thank God, there are in several places; and therefore I would that the books should always be at the place, unless the bishop should wish to have it with him, or it should be anywhere on loan, or any one should be writing another copy.'

This very remarkable preface is evidently of the very highest order of interest, both in itself and in its revelation of the personality of the great King, his continuity of thought,

¹ The repetition of *that* is usual in Anglo-Saxon.

² The meaning of this word is not known. On the face of it we should suppose that its purpose was either to ornament the cover, or to protect the book against mishandling, or to assist the reader in using the book. An ivory pointer, with the Alfred jewel at the top, seems to be a likely solution, especially as an ancient glose has "*Indicatorium, æstel*."

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his directness of speech, his habit of reasoning with himself and coming to a clear practical conclusion.

Whether because Alfred's study of Boethius had accustomed him to the combination of prose and verse, or because his love for the national songs inspired him, or because he thought that the praise of the bringer and of the author of the book itself should be cast into poetic form, he wrote what we may fairly call an introductory poem, as well as the prose address to Wærferth. He calls the *Pastoralis* an epistle because Gregory addressed it to Bishop John of Ravenna with what we should call a covering letter. We may give this striking poem of preface, for the most part in the careful and sympathetic rendering of the late Professor Earle, who realized that what is given as prose in the manuscript is, in fact, rugged verse. A rhythmic ictus is a great strengthening to written prose.

'This epistle	Augustine
over salt sea	brought from the south
to us inland dwellers,	so as it erst
indited had been	by Christ's doughty soldier
the Roman pontiff.	Much right discourse
did Gregory of glowing wit	give forth apace
with skilful soul,	a hoard of studious thought.
He of mankind	gained over the most
to the Guardian of heaven :	he of Romans the best,
of men the most learned	and widest admired.
At length into English	Alfred our King
brought my every word :	and me to his writers
south and north sent out ;	more copies of such
he bade them bring back,	that he to his bishops
might send,	for some of them needed it,
those who with Latin speech	had least acquaintance.'

In Mr. Sweet's vigorous prose the proem runs thus :

'This message Augustine over the salt sea brought from the south to the islanders, as the Lord's champion had formerly decreed it, the Pope of Rome (Dryhtnes cempa Rome papa). The wise Gregorius was versed in many true doctrines through the wisdom of his mind, his hoard of cunning thoughts. For he gained over most of mankind to the Guardian of heaven, best of Romans, wisest of men, most gloriously famous. Afterwards King Alfred translated

every word of me into English, and sent me to his scribes south and north ; ordered more such to be brought to him after the example, that he might send them to his bishops, for some of them needed it who knew little Latin.'

Alfred's reference to the scribes whom he had in his employ at more than one centre in his dominions should be noted. The words suggest that he had a few copies produced by dictation at his own court, wherever it might for the time be, and each of these copies multiplied by dictation at his *scriptoria* elsewhere, no doubt in the larger monasteries. There should be noted, too, the true Anglo-Saxon touch in the sudden outburst from the historical statement of a writer into the vigorous utterance of the inanimate object which the writer is describing. It follows exactly, in this respect, the great religious poem of the " Dream of the Holy Rood," where Caedmon, to whom we must ascribe the earliest form of the poem, begins with a prefatory description of his vision of a splendid cross, and then sets before us the Rood itself, pouring forth pathetic and passionate utterance.

Alfred's Preface attaches a special interest to this Early English Version of the *Pastoral Care*. It appears to make it clear that this is the first book of the series he had planned to set before his people. Thus he rightly began his instruction for the people by this admirable instruction for their teachers, who were or ought to be the leaders of religious thought in his days.

Probability would point to Bede's Ecclesiastical History as the second book that Alfred presented to his people in their own tongue.

CHAPTER II

A Table of Contents—Gregory's Preface—Mr. Sweet's linguistic principle of translation—Monosyllables—Alfred's rendering of the first four chapters in full, on the manner of man a ruler should be.

KING ALFRED had very sound ideas as to how a book should be most helpfully edited for unlearned folk, who could not turn rapidly over the pages and see what it was all about. He collected the headings of all the chapters and had them written in order at the beginning of the book, an early example of a full Table of Contents. To state them here will be the clearest way of stating the subjects discussed in the book. The figures in parenthesis refer to the Latin text.

PART I

1. That unlearned men are not to presume to undertake teaching.

2. Nor, again, let the learned who are unwilling to live as they have learned in books, undertake the dignity of teaching.

3. Concerning the burden of government, and how he must despise all hardships, and how afraid he must be of every luxury.

4. And how often the occupation of power and government distracts the mind of the ruler.

5. Concerning those who are able to be useful when in power, both by their example and by their virtues, and yet for their own comfort avoid it.

6. Concerning those who through humility avoid the burden of government, but if they are really humble do not resist the Divine decree.

7. That often the ministration of teaching is very blamelessly desired, and that often many very blamelessly are compelled to undertake it.

8. Concerning those who wish to be made bishops, how they seize on the words of the Apostle Paul to defend their desire.

9. How the mind that wishes to be above others deceives

itself while it thinks to do many good works, and simulates it before other men if he have worldly honour, and then wishes to neglect it when he has it.

10. What kind of man he is to be who is to rule.

11. What kind of man he is to be who is not to rule.

PART II

12 (1). How he who properly and regularly attains thereto is to conduct himself in it.

13 (2). How the teacher is to be pure in heart.

14 (3). How the teacher is to be foremost in his works.

15 (4). How the teacher is to be discreet in his silence and useful in his speech.

16 (5). How the teacher is to be sympathizing with, and mindful of, all men in their troubles.

17 (6). How the ruler is to be the companion of the well-doers from humility, and severe against the vices of the wicked from righteous anger.

18 (7). How the teacher is not to diminish his care of inner things on account of outer occupations, nor on the other hand neglect the outer affairs for the inner.

19 (8). That the ruler is not to do his good works for vainglory only, but rather for the love of God.

20 (9). That the ruler is to know accurately that vices often deceive, and pretend to be virtues.

21 (10). How discreet the ruler is to be in his blaming and praising, and also in his zeal and gentleness.

22 (11). How greatly the ruler is to be engaged in his meditation on the holy law.

PART III

23 (1). How great is to be the distinction and how variously men are to be taught with the art of instruction.

Alfred's Chapters 24 to 59 are all of them concerned with this distinction of treatment, how differently the young and the old are to be admonished; the men and the women; the rich and the poor; the cheerful and the sad; princes and subjects; masters and servants and slaves; the foolish and the wise; and so on. The Third Book in the Latin gives in its first chapter a long list of these distinctions, containing thirty-five items, corresponding to Alfred's chapters, and its chapters proceed to deal with these items. Alfred's method is simpler than Gregory's.

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The last five chapters of Alfred, 60 to 64, correspond to Gregory's Book III, Chapters 36 to 40, with the following headings :

60 (36). How many a one is to be exhorted that his good works may not become evil.

61 (37). How a man is to be exhorted when he suffers many evil temptations.

62 (38). That it is often better to leave the lighter sins alone, lest the more serious be carried out.

63 (39). That weak minds are not to be taught too loftily.

64 (40). Concerning the works of the teacher and his words.

Alfred's concluding chapter is Gregory's Part IV.

65 (iv). When any one has performed all this, how he is then to consider and understand himself, lest either his life or teaching puff him up too much.

Mr. Sweet renders Gregory's Preface, as translated by or for King Alfred, as follows :

'Thou dearest brother, very friendly and very profitably thou blamedst me, and with humble spirit thou chidedst me, because I hid myself and wished to flee the burden of pastoral care. The heaviness of which burdens, all that I remember of it, I will write of in this present book, lest they seem to any one easy to undertake ; and I also advise no one to desire them who manages them rashly ; and let him who desires them rashly and unrighteously fear ever undertaking them. Now I wish this discourse to rise in the mind of the learner as on a ladder, ¹ step by step, nearer and nearer, until it firmly stands on the floor of the mind which learns it ; and therefore I divide it into four parts. One of the divisions is how he is to attain the dignity ; the second, how he is to live in it ; the third how he is to teach in it ; the fourth is how he is to desire to perceive his own faults and subdue them, lest having attained it he lose his humility, or again lest his life be unlike his ministration, or he be too presumptuous and severe because he has attained the post of instruction. But let the fear of his own faults moderate it, and let him confirm with the example of his life his teaching for those who do not believe his words ; and when he has performed a good work, let him remember the evil that he

¹ This simile appears also in the opening part of Boethius.

has done, that his contrition for his evil deeds may moderate his joy for his good works ; lest he be puffed up in spirit before the eyes of the unseen Judge, and inflated with pride, and so through his egotism lose his good works. But there are many who seem to me to be very similar in want of learning, who although they were never disciples yet wish to be teachers, and think the burden of teaching very light, because they do not know the power of its greatness. From the very door of this book, that is, from the beginning of this discourse, the unwary are driven away and blamed, who arrogate to themselves the art of teaching which they never learned.'

We may now turn to Alfred's rendering of the *Pastoralis* of Gregory, as translated by Mr. Sweet.

Mr. Sweet says (Preface, p. x) : " I have endeavoured to translate into the received language of the present day, and have carefully avoided that heterogeneous mixture of Chaucer, Dickens, and Broad Scotch, which is affected by so many translators from the Northern languages." We shall keep, as a rule, to Mr. Sweet's translation into modern English. But it is often more like a translation into Latin or Greek ; art, herb, physician, for craft, wort, leech. The Old English is in many cases so closely reproduced in our now familiar tongue, and its vigorous character makes it so strong and effective, that we lose something of the force of Alfred's books in Mr. Sweet's hands. It matters much less to us, because we read the words for ourselves, whereas the men of his time had them read to them, and it is the spoken word that is so strong in its shortness, sharpness, and stroke. A monosyllabic account of Alfred himself is printed at the end of the Introduction to this volume. It was published in the *Church Monthly Magazine*, and was followed by several sermons and articles in monosyllables, varying from 1200 to 1900 words, all or almost all Anglo-Saxon.

It will be well to allow the King to give us the first four chapters of the *Pastoralis* in full. After that, we can set side by side the modern English rendering of Alfred's version and the modern English rendering of Gregory's Latin in one of his most important chapters. It will be evident at a glance that there is some room for questions on the manuscripts of the Old and New Testaments from which quotations are made.

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1. 'That the unlearned (*imperiti*, unskilled) are not to presume to undertake the office of teacher.

'Since no art can be taught by him who has not diligently learned it before, why are the unlearned ever so rash as to undertake the care of teaching, when the art of teaching is the art of all arts? Who does not know that the wounds of the mind are more obscure than the wounds of the body? And yet worldly physicians are ashamed of undertaking to cure wounds which they cannot see, especially if they neither understand the disease nor the herbs which are to be employed. And sometimes those who are to be the physicians of the mind, although they cannot understand anything of the spiritual precepts, are not ashamed of taking upon themselves to be physicians of the mind. But since now all the honour of this world is turned by the grace of God to the honour of the pious, so that now the most pious are in greatest estimation, many pretend to be pious teachers because they desire great worldly honour. On which subject Christ Himself exclaimed, and said thus: "They desire to be greeted first, and honoured in market-places and at banquets, and to recline first at suppers, and they seek the most honourable seat in assemblies." Since with pride and vainglory they thus arrive at the honour of pastoral care, they are unable properly to fulfil the duties of their ministration and to become teachers of humility; but their exhortation in teaching is disgraced when they teach one thing, having learned another. Such men God chided through the prophet, and reproached them with such doings when He said: "They reigned, but not by my will; they were princes, and I knew them not." Those who so rule, rule through their own power, not through that of the highest Judge, since they are not supported on any foundation of the Divine power, nor chosen for any excellence, but they are inflamed by their own desire, so as to seize on so high an office rather than obtain it by their deserts. And the eternal and unseen Judge exalts them as if He knew them not, and suffers it without interfering, as an example of patience. But though they perform many wonders in their office, when they come to Him He says, "Depart from me, ye evildoers; I know not what ye are." Again, He rebuked them through the prophet for their want of learning, when He said, "The shepherds had not understanding; they had my law, and knew me not." He who knows not God's commands is not acknow-

ledged by God. The same said St. Paul : " He who knows not God, God knows not him."

'Foolish teachers come for the people's sins. Therefore often through the teacher's folly the disciples come to sorrow, and often through the teacher's wisdom foolish disciples are preserved. If then both are foolish, we must consider what Christ Himself said in His Gospel ; He said : " If the blind lead the blind, they will both fall into a pit." On the same subject the Psalmist spoke : " May their eyes be dimmed that they may not see, and their back always bent." He did not say this because he wished or desired it to befall any man, but he prophesied how it was to happen. For the eyes are the teachers and the back the disciples ; because the eyes are in the front and upper part of the body, and the back comes after everything ; and in the same way the teachers go before the people, and the people after. When the eyes of the teacher's mind are dimmed, which ought to go before with good examples, the people bend their backs under many heavy burdens.

2. 'Nor, again, let the learned, who are not willing to live as they have learned in books, undertake the dignity of teaching.

'Many wise teachers also fight with their behaviour against the spiritual precepts which they teach with words, when they live in one way and teach in another. Often when the shepherd goes by dangerous ways, the flock, which is too unwary, falls. Of such shepherds the prophet spoke : " Ye trod down the grass of God's sheep, and ye defiled the water with your feet, though ye drank it before undefiled." Thus the teachers drink very pure water when they learn the Divine wisdom, and also when they teach it ; but they defile it with their own vices, and set an example to the people by their vices not by their instruction. Though the people thirst for instruction they cannot drink it, but it is defiled by the teachers doing one thing and teaching another. Of whom again God spoke through the prophet : " Bad priests are the people's fall." No man injures more the holy assembly than those who assume the name and order of the holy office, and then pervert it ; for no man dare admonish hem if they do wrong, and sins become very widely extended since they are so much honoured. But they would of their own accord flee the burden of so great a sin, being unworthy of it, if they would hear with the ears of their heart, and

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carefully consider the words of Christ when He said, "He who deceives one of these little ones, it were better for him to have a millstone tied to his neck, and so to be thrown to the bottom of the sea." By the mill is signified the circuit of this world and also of man's life and their toil, and by the bottom of the sea their end and the last judgment. The mill is turned when the man is ended; the great mill is turned when this world is ended. He who attains holy orders and with bad examples either of words or of works leads others astray, it were better for him to end his life in a humbler station, and in earthly works; for if he do well in them he will have a good reward for it, if he do ill he will suffer less torment in hell if he arrive there alone, than if he bring another with him.

3. 'Of the burden of rule, and how he is to despise all toils, and how afraid he must be of every luxury.

'We have said thus much in few words, because we wished to show how great is the burden of teaching, lest any one dare undertake it who is unworthy of it, lest he through desire of worldly honour undertake to be a guide to perdition. Very justly the apostle James forbade it when he said, "Brothers, let there not be too many masters among you." Therefore the mediator Himself between God and men, that is Christ, shunned undertaking earthly rule. He who surpasses all the wisdom of the higher spirits, and reigned in heaven before the world was, it is written in the Gospel that the Jews came and wished to make Him king by force. When the Saviour perceived it, He dismissed them and hid Himself. Who could easier rule men without sin than He who created them? He did not shun supremacy because any man was worthier of it, but He wished to set us an example of not coveting it too much; and also wished to suffer for us. He wished not to be king, yet of His own free will He came to the cross. He shunned the honour of reigning, and chose the punishment of the most ignominious death, that we who are His members might learn from Him to shun the seductions of this world; and also that we might not dread its fear and terror, and for the sake of truth love toil and dread luxury and therefore avoid it. For through luxury men are often inflated with pride, while hardships through pain and sorrow purify and humble them. In prosperity the heart is puffed up; in adversity, even if it were formerly puffed up, it is humbled. In prosperity men forget them-

K

selves ; in adversity they must remember themselves even if they are unwilling. In prosperity they often lose the good they formerly did ; in adversity they often repair the evil they long ago did. Often a man is subjected to the instruction of adversity, although before he would not follow the moral example and instruction of his teacher. But although schooled and taught by adversity, if he attain to power, soon, through the homage of the people, he becomes proud and accustomed to presumption ; as King Saul at first declined the throne and deemed himself quite unworthy of it. But as soon as he obtained the rule of the kingdom he became proud, and was angry with that same Samuel who formerly brought him to the throne and consecrated him, because he told him of his faults before the people, since he could not control him before with their approval ; and when he wished to depart from him he seized him and tore his clothes, and insulted him. So also David, who pleased God in nearly everything, as soon as he had not the burden of so many troubles, he was wounded with pride and showed it very cruelly in the murder of Uriah, his own faithful servant, for the shameless desire of his wife. The same one who formerly spared him who had sinned against him with so many evils, became so immoderately eager for the death of the virtuous Uriah, without any offence or crime against himself. The same David who forbore injuring the king who brought him into such painful exile and drove him from his country, when he had him completely in his power in the cave, took a lappet of his coat as a sign of having had him in his power, and yet let him escape for his former allegiance. The same David exposed his own army to great danger, and caused many to perish, when he laid snares for his innocent and faithful servant. The sin would have removed him very far from the number of all the saints, had not his toils and troubles come to his help again.

4. 'And how often the trouble of rule and government distracts the mind of the ruler.

'Very often the manifold cares of teaching when it is undertaken disturbs the heart, and when the mind is divided among many objects it is the less firm in each, and also less useful. Of which spoke the wise Solomon : "My son, do not divide thy mind among too many things, and thy works likewise." For often when a man loses the fear and firmness which he ought properly to have within him, his mind allures

him to many useless works. He is concerned for them, and very mindful of them, and forgets himself, when he occupies his mind with the useless works more than he ought. He is like the man who is occupied on a journey with other affairs, until he knows not whither he formerly wished to go, and cannot think what he loses in the delay, and how greatly he sins therein. Hezekiah King of Israel did not think that he sinned when he led the foreign ambassadors into his treasury, and showed them his treasures. But he experienced God's anger in the misery which came to his child after his days. And yet he thought it was no sin. Often when any one happens to do anything famous and wonderful, and those who are under him admiring it praise him, he is puffed up in spirit and completely calls down upon himself the severe anger of his Judge, although he does not show it in bad deeds. Yet through his pride the Judge is compelled to anger, and the Judge, who knows all the thoughts of the mind, also judges those thoughts. We can hide our desires and thoughts from men, but not from God. The Babylonian king was greatly puffed up in spirit for his power and success, when he rejoiced at the size and beauty of the city he had built, and extolled himself in thought above all other men, and spoke silently in his mind: "How! is not this the great Babylon which I myself built as a throne of splendour, to adorn and glorify myself with my own might and strength!" The silent voice the unseen Judge very soon heard, and answered him very distinctly with the punishments with which he very quickly punished it. He rebuked and blamed his pride by depriving him of his worldly kingdom, and turning him into an irrational animal, breaking his spirit by associating him with beasts of the field; and so by the severe punishment he lost his state of man. To the very one who thought he was above all other men, it happened that he hardly knew whether he was a man at all. However, although I tell this now, I do not blame great works, nor legitimate power,¹ but I blame a man for being conceited on that account; and I would strengthen the weakness of their hearts, and forbid the incompetent such desires, lest any of them presume to seize on power or the office of teaching so rashly, lest those attempt such dangerous paths who cannot stand firmly on level ground.'

¹ Experience of Alfred's manner and of Gregory's manner makes us feel sure that this imperial and imperious statement is Alfred's own. Gregory merely says *Hæc proferentes non potestatem reprehendimus*.

CHAPTER III

Alfred and Canon Bramley side by side—Further chapters as given by Alfred—Dr. Giles's objection to continuing his translation of the *Pastoral Care*—Moses and the Tabernacle—The temptations of a confessor.

HAVING now allowed King Alfred to represent Gregory in delivering his first four chapters, we must allow Gregory to set forth a chapter in Mr. Bramley's pleasant English, printing side by side with it Mr. Sweet's rendering of the Anglo-Saxon chapter.

ALFRED

10. 'What kind of man he is to be who is to rule.

'Every effort is to be made to induce him to undertake the office of bishop who mortifies his body with many hardships, and lives spiritually, and regards not the pleasures of this world, nor dreads any worldly trouble, but loves the will of God alone. It is befitting for such a disposition, not for mere weakness of body or mere worldly reproach to decline the supremacy, nor to be greedy of other men's property, but to be liberal with his own, and his heart is always to be inclined to forgiveness for piety's sake, yet never more so than is befitting for righteousness. He must not do anything unlawful, but he must bewail the unlawful

GREGORY

i. 10. What manner of man ought to come to govern.

He, therefore, ought by all means to be brought forward for a pattern of life, who, dying to the affections of the flesh, already liveth after a spiritual sort, who hath left worldly prosperity behind, who feareth no adversity, and desireth only inward wealth. And, agreeing well with his intentions, neither doth his body in any wise strive against them through infirmity, nor his spirit greatly by disdain: He who is not drawn to desire other men's goods, but is liberal with his own. Who through his bowels of compassion is quickly bent to forgiveness, but is never, by forgiving more than is meet, turned away from the post of uprightness. Who is

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ALFRED

deeds of others as if they were his own sins ; and he must sympathize with their weakness in his heart, and rejoice in the prosperity of his neighbours as his own. His works must make him worthy to be imitated by other men. He must strive to live so as to moisten the dried-up hearts with the flowing waves of his instruction. He must learn to accustom himself to incessant prayer, until he sees he can obtain from God what he requires, as if it were said to him, "Thou hast called me ; here I am." What thinkest thou, now, if a criminal comes to one of us, and prays him to lead him to a man in power who is angry with him, and intercede for him ? If he is not known to me, or any man of his household, I shall very soon answer him and say, "I cannot undertake such an errand, I am not familiar enough with him." If we are ashamed to speak so to strangers, how dare we speak so to God ? Or how can he presume to take the office of mediator between God and other men, who is not sure of being himself intimate with God through the merits of his life, or to intercede for other men while he knows not whether he himself has been interceded for ? He has

GREGORY

guilty of no unlawful deeds, but mourneth for those that are committed by others, as though they were his own. Who feeleth for the infirmity of others with hearty sympathy, and rejoiceth in the good deeds of his neighbour as in his own advancement. Who so giveth himself for a pattern in all things to others, that he have nothing, at least in act, to put him to shame among them. Who striveth so to live, as to be able to water also the parched hearts of his neighbours with streams of doctrine. Who hath already learnt by the using and making proof of prayer that he can obtain from the Lord what things he asketh, to whom it is already said, as it were specially by the voice of experience, "Whiles thou art yet speaking, I will say, Lo ! here I am !" For if any one should chance to come to take us to intercede for him with some powerful man who is angry with him and a stranger to us, we should answer at once : "We cannot go to intercede, because we have no intimate acquaintance with him." If, therefore, a man is ashamed to be an intercessor with a man with whom he hath no assurance, with what heart doth he catch at the place of interceding for the people with

ALFRED

reason to fear arousing greater anger because of his own sins. We all know that among men he who prays a man to intercede for him with another, who is angry with the interceder also, irritates the angry mind and arouses more anger. Let those consider this who still desire this world, and avoid arousing with their intercessions more violent anger of the severe Judge, lest, when they covet so great an authority they lead their disciples into destruction. But let every one carefully examine himself, lest he presume to undertake the 'office of instruction whilst any vice prevail within him. Let him not desire to intercede for the sins of others who is disgraced with his own.'

GREGORY

God, who knoweth not by the worthiness of his life that he is acquainted with His grace. Or, how doth he ask pardon from Him for others, who is ignorant whether or no He be appeased towards himself. And, in this matter, there is yet another point more anxiously to be dreaded, lest he who is supposed to be able to appease His anger should himself deserve it by his own sinfulness. For we all know perfectly that when he that is displeasing is sent to intercede, the wrath of him who is angry is provoked to further extremities. He, therefore, who is still bound by earthly desires, must beware, lest by kindling more fiercely the wrath of his strict Judges, he become the author of ruin to those that are put under him, while he is delighting himself with the place of honour.

The parallelism of these two renderings shows us the pointedness of the King. He usually ends with a fillip. In this case the last two sentences are his own addition, a sharp summary of the somewhat verbose chapter of Gregory.

ii. 1 ; A. 12. 'How he who attains the dignity properly and regularly is to conduct himself therein.

'The bishop's works must surpass other men's works as much as the shepherd's life is superior to that of the flock. It behoves him to think and carefully consider how very necessary it is for him to be bound to righteousness with the rope of understanding¹ through whose dignity² the people is called flock ; it befits the shepherd to be lofty in works, profitable in words, and discreet in silence ; he must grieve

¹ *Quanta necessitate constringitur.*

² In comparison with whose dignity.

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for the troubles of others as if he suffered equally with them ; he must care and provide for all ; through humility he must be the equal of all well-doers ; he must be stern with sinners, and through righteousness he must feel indignation at their ill-deeds ; and yet in his care of them he is not to neglect the obedient ; nor also in his love of the latter is he to neglect the disobedient.' ¹

As an example of Gregory's and Alfred's treatment of a difficult subject, we may select Alfred's Chapter 16, the fifth chapter of the Second Book. The Anglo-Saxon heading is not as fine as the Latin heading.

ii. 5 ; A. 16. ALFRED. 'How the teacher is to be sympathizing with and solicitous about all men in their troubles.'

GREGORY. "That the ruler should be nearest to every one in sympathy, but soar above all in contemplation."

ALFRED. 'The teacher must be the nearest to all men and sympathizing with them in their troubles, and elevated above all with the Divine foresight of his mind, that through his pious benevolence he may take on himself the sins of other men, and also by the lofty contemplation of his mind surpass himself with the desire of invisible things ; and that aspiring after such lofty things, he may not despise his weak and sinful neighbours, nor, on the other hand, through their weakness give up his lofty aspirations.'

At this point Gregory makes a digression which was one of the causes of Dr. Giles's determination not to proceed further with a presentment of the *Pastoral Care* in an English dress. "Paul," Gregory says, "was carried into Paradise, and searched the secrets of the third heaven ; and yet he could turn his mind and his words to questions affecting sexual relations." No doubt there are here, as in other books of this nature, matters which belonged to the confessional ; but they are few and far between. As we shall see shortly, Gregory calls attention to the danger of the confessional for the confessor who has to hear confessions of sins.

Omitting the words to which Dr. Giles objected, an objection quite natural, we can proceed with Gregory's remarks on St. Paul, as rendered by Alfred.

¹ Here Gregory has, "not lessening his care for things within through his employment about things without, nor abandoning the management of outward matters in his anxiety for things within." This has been fully said in an earlier chapter. Alfred appears to have taken the *internorum* and *exteriorum* as a parable of obedient persons and persons out of obedience.

'In his own person he (St. Paul) was greatly exalted with the power of the Holy Ghost, and yet his piety made him equally solicitous about earthly men in their need. Therefore he said, "Who is weak and I am not weak; or who is shamed and I am not ashamed?" Again, he said on the same subject, "When I was among the Jews I was like them." He did not say so because he wished to forsake his honour and faith as they did, but he wished to show his piety by pretending to be an unbeliever, and learned to be merciful to other men by thinking how he would desire mercy if he were such as they. And again he said, "If we now exalt our thoughts beyond measure it is for the sake of God; if we moderate them again, it is for your sake." He perceived that he surpassed himself in the contemplation of godliness, and he knew how to let himself down again to the level of his disciples. Therefore Jacob the patriarch anointed the stone which lay at his head, to show that he would afterwards tithe his inheritance there, because of the vision he saw in sleep when he slept at the stone. He saw a ladder standing near him on the earth. The other end was up in heaven, and at the upper end the Lord reclined, and angels climbed up and down the ladder.¹ For good teachers, gazing upwards, desire not only to seek and contemplate the holy Head of the holy Church, which is God, but also from kind-heartedness to descend to His members. Therefore Moses often went in and out of the temple, because in it he was led to Divine contemplation, and outside he occupied himself with the people's wants. In it he contemplated in his mind the mysteries of godliness, and brought them out thence to the people, and proclaimed what they were to do and observe. And whenever he was in doubt he ran back² into the temple and asked God about it before the ark, in which was the covenant of the temple, thus setting an example to those who are now rulers. When they are uncertain about anything which they are to do outside, they must return to their mind, and there ask God, as Moses did before the ark in the temple. If they still doubt there, let them go to the holy Scriptures, and ask there what they are to do or teach. For Truth itself, that is Christ, when on earth prayed on

¹ The original Latin has only this: Hence Jacob, when the Lord was leaning over him from above, and the stone was anointed below, saw the angels ascending and descending.

² *Recurrit*, he returned to the temple. Curiously enough both Alfred and Canon Bramley make Moses "run."

mountains and in retired places, and performed His miracles in cities, thus preparing the path of imitation for good teachers, lest they despise the company of weak and sinful men, though they themselves aspire to the highest. Because when love descends through kind-heartedness, and is occupied with the need of his neighbours, it rises marvellously; and the more cheerfully it descends, the easier it ascends, signifying that those who are set above others are to let themselves be seen, that their subjects may not through shame fear confessing to them their secrets, that when the sinful are overwhelmed with the waves of temptation, they may hasten to take refuge in the heart of the teacher for confession like a child in its mother's bosom, and wash away the sins wherewith they think themselves polluted, with his help and counsel, and become purer than they were before confession, washed in the tears of their prayers.¹

'Therefore also there stood before the temple a brazen basin, supported by twelve brazen oxen, that those who wished to enter the temple might wash their hands in the sea. The basin was big enough to cover the oxen entirely, except the projecting heads. What signify the twelve oxen but the twelve Apostles and the whole succession of bishops which come after them? Of which was spoken in the law: Bind not the mouth of the thirsting oxen.² This saying Paul applied again to those bishops whose perfect works we see, while we know not what their thoughts are before the severe judge with his hidden requital. When they descend to wash the sins of their neighbours when they confess, they support, as it were, the basin before the church door, as the oxen did before the temple; so that whoever inwardly desires to enter the gates of eternal life must confess every temptation which has assailed him to the mind of his confessor before the temple; and as men's hands and feet were under the old law washed in the basin before the temple, so let us now wash our mind's hands and our works with confession.³

¹ The original Latin has only this: that when the little ones endure the buffets of temptation they may run to the pastor's heart as to their mother's bosom, and wash away, by the comfort of his exhortation and the tears of prayer, that wherein they see themselves beforehand to be polluted by the filth of sin which importuneth them.

² The Latin has: What is signified by the twelve oxen but the whole order of pastors? Of whom, as St. Paul declareth, the Law saith: Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.

³ The Latin only has: that whosoever is striving to enter the gate of eternity may show his temptations to the soul of the pastor, and as it were wash the hands of thought or deed in the laver of the oxen.

‘It often happens, also, that when the confessor hears the temptations of him who confesses,¹ he is himself assailed with the same temptations. The water in the basin was dirty when many hands and feet were washed in it. In the same way, when the sins of many are washed in the mind of the priest with his instruction, and he receives the dirt of the washers, he fears losing his unruffled purity. But the pastor has no cause to fear it, for God considers it very carefully, and the more he is afflicted with the temptations of others, the easier deliverance He grants him from his own.’

¹ *Dum rectoris animus aliena tentamenta condescendo cognoscit.*

CHAPTER IV

That vices pretend to be virtues—The prologue to the Third Book—How a man should teach different persons differently—The parable of the harp—David and the harp—Nathan and David—The surgeon and the lancet—Masters, servants, and slaves—The foolish and the wise—The modest and the shameless.

HERE is a very practical chapter.

ii. 9; A. 20: 'That the ruler must know well that vices often deceive, and pretend to be virtues.

'The ruler must also know well that vices often seem to be virtues and good qualities, through deceit. Many a man fasts much, and has the reputation of doing it for abstinence, but does it, however, for niggardliness and avarice. Many a one is lavish of his property, wishing to gain the reputation of generosity, and men think he does it for virtue; and it is, however, done rather for vanity than for charity. Often also excessive forgiveness seems to men to be humanity. And often, also, immoderate anger seems to men to be righteous indignation. A man is often very hasty, and rushes very senselessly and rashly into all his actions, and yet men think it is from readiness and alacrity; a man is often hesitating in every action, and very slow, and men think it is from stupidity and cowardice, and yet it is from wisdom and caution.¹ Therefore it is indispensable for the ruler to be able well to distinguish between virtues and vices; lest the miser and the covetous rejoice in the reputation of being provident in what he ought to keep or give away; or, again, lest the ostentatious and the squanderer, because of the waste of his property, boast and think himself virtuous and benevolent; or, again, lest the assentator [the flattering assenter], who is ready to pass over what he ought to punish, bring his subjects to eternal punishments; or, again, lest he who punishes sins excessively, sin worse thereby.'

The concluding sentences of Alfred are a characteristic example of the independence of his treatment. Gregory

¹ The Latin has only this: Headlong action is often supposed to be the efficiency of speed, and slowness to act the deliberation of seriousness.

put them thus : "or by unreasonably hastening that which might have been done duly and seriously he should render it of no esteem ; or by putting off the merit of a good action he should change it for the worse." Alfred puts them thus : 'or, again, when he has anything to punish rightly and severely, lest he delay, so that his righteous indignation become cold, and he cannot afterwards so easily punish it ; that the sinful man be not let off too easily, lest he lose the reward of the good work which he ought to have merited with correction.'

The First and Second Books of the *Pastoral Care* are devoted to the consideration of the kind of man a ruler, or teacher, ought to be. The Third Book turns to a consideration of the manner in which he should teach. It is the only book which has a prologue, and the prologue is very interesting. It points out how various are the needs of the hearers, and how various should be their treatment by the skilled teacher ; and it introduces a very pretty parable, which Alfred no doubt greatly enjoyed.

It should be borne in mind that Gregory describes the priest as *rector*, the "ruler," while Alfred describes him as the 'teacher.' This accounts for the use of "subjects" and 'hearers' as describing those with whom the priest deals.

A. 23 : 'How great is the difference, and how variously men are to be taught with the art of instruction.

'Hitherto we have said what the pastor (*hierda*) is to be ; now we will show him how he is to teach, as the man of blessed memory Gregory who was by another name called Nanzanenus told us long before [about A.D. 380] : "It is not proper to teach all men in the same way, because they are not all of the same mind and morals." Because often the same instruction which benefits one injures the other ; as is the nature of many kinds of herbs and plants, on which some animals fatten, others die ; as with the same gentle whistling with which a horse is soothed, a dog can be roused. So also there are many remedies which diminish some diseases and increase others ; and bread, which increases the vigour of strong men, diminishes that of children.' ¹

¹ *Parvuli*. The physicians say that to feed little children on bread would tend to induce rickets. That disease is said to have come out in England about 1620, so that Alfred would not know of it. But he certainly knew of twisted legs going awry, wriggling, whence the name of rickets comes.

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Alfred gives the parable thus :

‘Because of the difference of the subjects, the words of the teacher must be different, that he suit himself to all his subjects, to each according to his capacity, and yet so as not to swerve from lawful and right instruction. What therefore shall we call the thoughts of men but, as it were, the stretched strings of a harp, which the harper very variously draws and touches, and so prevents them from sounding differently from the tune he wishes ; touches them all with the same hand, to make them sound harmoniously, although he touches them differently. So every teacher must arouse the minds of his subjects to the same love and faith, with the same doctrine, and with various admonition’

We can now enter upon the Third Book, still giving Alfred’s rendering.

iii. 1, 2 ; A. 24-26 : ‘Men are to be admonished one way in another way women. Men are to be taught more seriously and severely, women more lightly ; that the men may aspire to a greater burden, and the women brought on by gentle treatment.

‘The young are to be taught in one way, in another way the old ; because the young are more often made useful with zealous admonition, and the old with mild entreaties, as it is written in the law : “ Rebuke not the old man, but entreat him as thy father.”

‘The poor are to be admonished in one way, in another way the rich. The poor are to be consoled and cheered, lest they despair too much by reason of their hardships. The others are to be terrified, lest they be too proud of their magnificence. To the poor man was said through the Lord to the prophet : “ Fear not, for thou shalt not be confounded.” And soon after He soothed him, saying : “ Thou poor man, who art prostrated and thrown over with the storm and whirlwind, I have chosen thee in the furnace wherein thou wert melted, that is, in thine afflictions.” But St. Paul rebuked the rich, when he said to the disciples : “ Tell the rich throughout this world that they are not to be too proud in their thoughts, nor trust too much to these uncertain riches.” By which we can clearly understand that the teacher of humility when He spoke of the rich did not say “ pray,” but “ tell and command.” And we can also

understand that the poor and weak are to be cheered, and the proud and puffed-up are not to be revered, but are to be so much the more commanded rather than entreated, the more they are seen to be puffed up because of their worldly magnificence and inflated with pride. Of whom Christ spoke in His Gospel: "Woe to you rich men, whose whole love and hope is in your worldly riches; ye care not for the eternal joys, but ye delight with all your heart in the enjoyments of this present life." It is necessary to console him who is melted in the furnace of his miseries, and he is to be rebuked and terrified who is puffed up with the joys and glories of this world; that the sorrowful may understand that the riches which are promised to them will come to them, though they do not see them yet, and also that the rich may understand that they cannot retain the riches they look at and possess. It is very necessary for the teacher to know who is poor and who is rich, and whom he is to admonish as a poor and whom as a rich man. Because the rich and the poor man so often change their natures that the rich man is humble and sad, and the poor man is puffed up and conceited. Therefore the teacher must quickly direct his tongue against what he perceives to be the man's thoughts, that the poor and proud man may be rebuked and humiliated with his words, when he sees that his miseries are not enough to afflict and humble him. But the more gently he must soothe the rich and humble man the more humble he sees that he is, when the riches which puff up all proud men are not able to make him proud. And often also he must attract the rich and proud man with gentle treatment, to entice him to goodness; because severe wounds are often alleviated and healed with gentle fomentations, and the physician stills and cures the paroxysms of the madman by soothing him according to his own desire. We must not forget how it happened to King Saul: when the evil spirit came upon him, David took his harp, and stilled his paroxysms with the music.'

Having played with the simile of David with the harp, Gregory turns to the prophet's dealing with David himself. Alfred, after his way, makes more than Gregory does of the simile of the physician and the lancet.

'Therefore Nathan came to rebuke King David, and pretended to speak of the cause of a poor man, and asked the

king's opinion, wishing him first to judge himself by another man, and then hear his own sin, that he might not be able afterwards to dispute the same sentence. And also the holy man observed both the sin and the hasty temper of the king, and his rashness, and therefore wished first to bind him with his own confession, and concealed from him that he would afterwards rebuke him. So the physician hides his knife from the man he is about to cut, thinking that if he show it him he will not allow him to cut him. But he feels very gently about the part he is going to cut, and cuts very quickly. So the prophet did to the king with his words: I think he would not have cut him so soon, if he had told him beforehand that he was going to cut him; therefore it was better for him to feel with the parable before he rebuked, as the physician feels and strokes, and hides and whets his knife, before he pierces. When the physician comes to cut the patient, he first examines the swelling, and doubts his patience, whether he will submit to be cut. He hides his lancet under his clothes until he wounds him, wishing him to feel it before he sees it; for he thinks if he see it beforehand he will refuse.'

It will evidently be of interest to see the original passage of the *Pastoral Care* which Alfred's translator renders thus. It will be seen that, contrary to the generally received opinion, translators acting for the King could handle their original quite boldly; and that the *Pastoral Care*, which from its nature was much less likely to be altered than others of the books which Alfred set before his people, was subjected to bold treatment, both in omission and in addition. Gregory himself put the passage dealing with Nathan and David thus:

"Hence it is that Nathan the prophet came to reprove the king, and sought for judgment as though in the cause of a poor man against a rich one; to the end that the king might first give sentence, and afterward hear his own guilt, that so he might in no way gainsay justice when he had uttered it against himself. And so the holy man, regarding both the sinner and the king, studied in a wonderful order, first to bind the daring culprit by confession, and afterward to cut him to the heart by his rebuke. He hid for a little while the man that he was aiming at, but he hit him suddenly when he had him. For perchance it would have fallen flatter (*pigrius*) if he had attempted to smite the sin openly from the

very beginning of his speech ; but by putting a similitude first, he gave point to the upbraiding which he hid. The surgeon had come to the sick man ; he saw that the wound must be cut, but he doubted of the sick man's endurance (*patientia*). He therefore hid the healthful instrument under his garment, and when it was brought out plunged it suddenly in the wound, that the sick man might feel the cutting steel before he saw it ; lest, if he saw it first, he should refuse to feel it."

The comparison has a direct bearing upon the practical character of the Anglo-Saxon mind, and upon the best means of attracting its attention. Pope Gregory, with his wonderful power of reaching and instructing the Roman mind, gave nineteen lines to Nathan, and nine lines to the homely parable of the surgeon. Alfred's translator, evidently bent on reaching the Anglo-Saxon mind, gave eleven lines to the prophet and seventeen to the surgeon. It seems to some of us, whose business it has been to try to reach the modern mind in England, that our race of to-day is the child of the translator rather than of the original author.

iii. 5 ; A. 29 : 'That masters are to be admonished in one way, in another servants and also slaves.'¹

'Servants are to be admonished in one way, in another masters. Servants are to be admonished always to preserve humility towards their masters. Masters are to be admonished never to forget how similar their nature is, and how similarly to the servants they are created. Servants are to be admonished not to despise their masters. They despise their masters if they neglect their will and commands. It is also to be made known to the masters that they are presumptuous towards God for his own gift, if they do not understand that those who are subject to them by the dispensation of God are equals and associates in their nature. The servant is to be told to know that he is not independent of his master. It is to be made known to the master that he is to understand that he is the fellow-servant of his servant. The servant is commanded, and thus addressed : " Be subject to your worldly masters." And again it is said, " All who are under the yoke of authority must hold their masters worthy of all honour and respect." And again it is said, " Ye masters, do the same to your men after their measure,

¹ The Latin is *Quomodo admonendi servi et domini*.

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moderating your threats ; consider that both their master and yours is in heaven.”’

There is a good deal of common sense in our next quotation from King Alfred.

iii. 6 ; A. 30 : ‘ That the foolish are to be admonished in one way, in another the wise.¹

‘ Those who know and love the wiles of this world are to be admonished in one way, in another the simple. The cunning² are to be admonished to despise what they know, the dull-witted to desire to know that of which they are ignorant. The conceit of the cunning is first to be blamed, that they may not deem themselves to be wise. In the simple is to be strengthened whatever they can understand of Divine wisdom, because, while they are not at all presumptuous, their hearts are in a very fit state to receive wisdom. But with the cunning we must labour hard to get them to forsake the wisdom which they think is wisdom, and take to the wisdom of God which they think folly. It is not necessary to advise the simple to forsake their wiles, for they have them not. Therefore it is much easier for them to rise to righteous wisdom than it is for the cunning to turn thither, because he was formerly puffed up with conceit because of his wiles. About the same thing St. Paul spoke : “ Whoever among you thinks himself the wisest in guiles, let him first become foolish that he may thence become wise.” Of the simple is said : “ Ye must not be too wise after the lusts of the body.”³ And again, Paul said : “ Those who seem to worldly men foolish, the Lord chooses, to confound the cunning, who are puffed up with the guiles of this world.” And yet it often happens that they are converted with mild arguments, and the simple, again, with examples. It is better for the cunning to be convinced by a righteous argument, and to be bound and overcome by the argument. It is good enough for the simple to know that other men’s works are blameless. Therefore the noble teacher St. Paul, who had to teach both wise and foolish, perceiving some of the Jews to be wiser, others simpler, said, admonishing those learned in the old books with gentle words : “ That which is now antiquated is almost dissolved.” And again he said to the foolish, perceiving that they ought to be admonished,

¹ *Sapientes et hebetes*, the wise and the dull. ² The knowing ones. ³ “After the flesh.”

with some examples: "Holy men suffered in this world many indignities and stripes, and many bonds and prisons, they were stoned, they were sawn with the saw, were tempted, were slain with swords." And again Paul said: "Remember those who went before you, who preached to you God's word, behold their life and departure, and walk in faith." He spoke thus to overcome and confute their guiles; and also to encourage the simple to greater enterprises with the gentle example.'

iii. 7; A. 31: 'That the modest are to be admonished in one way, the shameless in another.'¹

'The shameless are to be admonished in one way, the modest in another. The shameless cannot be managed without great blaming and threatening, the modest are often improved with moderate instruction. The shameless do not know that they do ill, without being told, and when told they do not believe it unless many men blame them for it. It is enough to reform the modest man, if his teacher remind him very gently of his faults. The more the shameless man is rebuked and humiliated, the better the chance of improving him; but with the modest man it is better to speak out what one has to blame in him only partially, as if touching it lightly. Therefore the Lord very openly blamed the shameless Jews, saying: "Your faces are as shameless as those of harlots." And again He soothed the modest, saying, "I will make thee forget the shame and disgrace of thy youth, and thou shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood, for it is thy Lord who made thee." And again St. Paul very openly blamed the shameless Galatians, saying: "O foolish Galatians, who hath afflicted you?" And again he said: "So foolish ye are, that what ye received spiritually ye wish to end carnally." He blamed the sins of the shameless as if he suffered equally with them, saying: "I rejoice greatly in the Lord, that ye were ever willing to impute anything to yourselves before I imputed it to you. It is good that ye do so now. Ye were not unoccupied, though ye did not do well." He spoke these words because he wished to reveal the sins of the shameless by blaming them, and conceal the negligence of the modest with gentle words.'

¹ *Impudentes et verecundi*, the impudent and the shamefast.

CHAPTER V

Sowers of dissension—Peacemakers—Leaving light sins alone lest worse be committed—Deep things not to be taught to the feeble—The simile of the cock at some length.

Our next subject affords opportunity for severe speaking.

iii. 23 ; A. 47 : ‘ After what manner those are to be admonished who sow dissensions and those who are peacemakers.

‘ Those who sow strife are to be admonished in one way, in another the peaceful. The lovers of strife are to be admonished to consider whose followers they are. Of the expelled angel it is written in the Gospel that he sowed the weed on the good acres. Therefore it was said of him : “ An enemy of ours did this.” Of the same enemy’s members it is thus spoken through Solomon¹ : “ An apostate is always useless, and goes with perverse mouth, and winks with the eyes, and treads with the foot, and speaks with the finger, and does evil with perverse heart, and is always sowing strife.” In this passage we hear how, when he wished to speak of the lover of strife, he called him the apostate ; because, had he not formerly fallen in his thoughts from the sight of God, like the proud angel, he would not have become outwardly the seed of strife. Of whom it is rightly written that he winks with his eyes, and talks with his fingers, and treads with his foot ; because the guardian, that is the will, who keeps the members externally, is inside. Therefore, when a man loses the consistency of his mind internally, he is sometimes very unsteadily agitated externally in his members, and shows by the agitation of the twigs² outside that there is no stability in the root inside. But let the sowers of strife hear what is written in the Gospel ; it is written : “ Blessed are the peaceful, for they shall be called the children of God.” From these words we can suppose that, since those who make peace are called the children of God, those are without doubt the devil’s children who try to

¹ Proverbs vi. 12–14.

² This little detail is a characteristic addition in the Anglo-Saxon version.

destroy it, because every one who wickedly tries to keep himself aloof from concord will relinquish the greenness¹ of love and wither in dissension. Therefore, although he bring forth some fruit of good works, if it is not begun from good will and sincere love it is nothing. From this let the sowers of strife consider how manifoldly they sin when they commit that single evil, and with it tear away from the human heart all good qualities. With that single evil they commit a multitude of other evils, because those who sow strife extinguish peace, which is the mother of all good qualities. Therefore no virtue is more acceptable to God than love, nor, again, any vice more pleasing to the devil than quarrelsomeness. Whoever, therefore, sows strife, and so destroys the peace of his companion, is a familiar servant of God's enemy, who is always depriving the infirm mind of the peace which he himself relinquished, and so ruined himself, till he fell down, and still wishes to block up our road, lest we ascend the path to the dignity from which he fell.

'Those, on the contrary, who sow peace are to be admonished not to do such great works too recklessly and rashly, and especially when they do not know whether peace is better established between the two, or not; because, as much as any diminution of peace between the good is injurious, so much is it also injurious if between the bad it is not diminished.² Because, if the perverse and unrighteous make fast their evil with peace, and combine it together, their power is increased, and their evil deeds are helped; because the greater their unanimity between themselves, the bolder they will be to trouble the good. Therefore the Divine voice spoke to the blessed Job, about the messengers of the useless vessel, that is the accursed antichrist, and said: "The limbs of the flesh cleave together."³ And again, it used scales as an illustration for his domestic servants, speaking thus: "The scale of every fish is joined to the other, so that no breath can pass out between." So also his followers, the more friendly and unanimous they are, the more closely they unite, the more firmly they join together to annoy the good. So also he who reconciles the wicked together, supports and strengthens unrighteousness, because the more unanimously

¹ *Viriditatem dilectionis.*

² *Sicut multum nocet si unitas desit bonis, ita valde est noxium si non desit malis.* The argument is a curious one.

³ The Vulgate differs much from the Authorized Version in the book of Job. The passages referred to are verses 14, 15, 16 of chapter xli.

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they persecute the good, the more they will be able to afflict them. Of which the noble teacher St. Paul spoke, when he saw how the sects of the Pharisees folk and Sadducees folk unanimously persecuted him, trying to set them at variance, he spoke thus : "What ye do, brothers, do manfully. How ! am I not your companion, and a Pharisee the same as you ! And I am persecuted because I preach about the hope of the rising again of the dead." He spoke thus because the Sadducees denied the rising after death, and the Pharisees believed the rising, and so Holy Writ says, So he broke up the oneness of those who would destroy him, and got away unhurt. Those who busy themselves in promoting peace are also to be admonished first to try and show the unwise minds what the love of inner peace ought to be, lest the outer peace injure them after a time ; that, when they think of righteous love, they may also take care not to be deceived by the outer love, and when they understand the Divine peace, the earthly peace may not put them to the worse. And again, when any bad men are so placed as not to be able to harm the good, although they wish to do so, it is better to make earthly peace between them until they can attain the higher peace ; that through human peace they may rise to Divine peace, though it be yet far from them because the evil of their unrighteousness still hardens them ; that love and the fellowship of their neighbours may bring them to the better.'

Our next subject, as stated in the heading of the Anglo-Saxon version, is open to the questionings of casuistry, as is its treatment by Gregory and by his translator.

iii. 38 ; A. 62 : 'That sometimes it is better to leave the light sins alone, lest the graver ones be perpetrated.'¹

'Often also it happens that two vices assail the same man, one less, the other greater. Therefore the physician of the mind must first direct his attention to the one which he thinks likely to be the first to bring the man to perdition. Sometimes, however, when the attention is concentrated on the one, the other increases. Therefore the wise physician must first let the lesser one increase, and direct his attention to the greater ; until the time comes when he can see to the other, unless he can attend to them both together. He does

¹ The Latin has "that the graver ones be removed," which is nearer to the argument of the chapter.

not accumulate vices thereby, but tends the wounded man whom he has to watch over, till he can completely cure him. Those who cannot relinquish gluttony are often overcome by fornication. Often also it happens, that he who dreads and abstains from both of them, falls into vainglory, because no one can relinquish either of these without the other increasing. Which, then, of the evils ought rather to be attended to, if not the most dangerous? Therefore it is better to let the vainglory increase for a time, until full attention can be given to the fornication. Therefore St. Paul said to his servant, when he saw that he would either continue to do evil or desire praise for his goodness, he said: "If thou desirest not to have cause to fear thy Lord, do good: then will He praise thee." Yet no man must do the good he does, merely that he may not have cause to fear his Lord; or, again, for the desire of earthly praise. Therefore the noble teacher St. Paul, when he saw that he could not teach his servant both to relinquish evil and not to desire any praise therefor, allowed him the vainglory for a time and forbade the evil. When he allowed the vainglory he forbade him the evil, that he might more easily relinquish the one by having in the other what he desired.'

In our next example we may without presumption prefer Alfred's heading to Gregory's.

iii. 39; A. 63.: 'That weak minds are not to be taught too loftily.¹

'The teacher is to know that he is by no means to impose on any man more than he can bear, lest the rope of his mind be overstretched till it breaks asunder. Therefore lofty doctrine is better concealed from many men and preached to few. Therefore Truth, that is, Christ, spoke of itself, saying: "Who, thinkest thou, is so faithful and prudent a steward that God will set him over His household, that he may equitably apportion to them the wheat at the due time?" By the measuring of the wheat is signified measured words, lest more of these are poured into the shallow mind than it can hold, so that it overflows. Therefore St. Paul said: "I cannot speak to you as to spiritual, but as to carnal men; since in your faith you are still children, I must still give you milk to drink, not meat to eat." Therefore Moses

¹ The Latin has "that deep things ought not to be preached at all to feeble souls."

hid the excessive brightness of his countenance before the people, when he came from his secret conversation with the Lord, because he did not yet wish to teach them the secrets of the holy law, nor could they yet understand them. Therefore it was also commanded, through Moses, that if any one dug a pit, and neglected to enclose it, and an ox or an ass fell into it, he was to pay for it. So also, if any one comes to the highest wisdom, and then does not conceal the secrets of Divine wisdom from the foolish, he is accounted sinful if he reduces either a pure or an impure man to despair. Therefore the Lord said to the blessed Job : " Who gave the cock wisdom ? " That means, that all holy teachers, who teach in the darkness of this world, bear resemblance to cocks who crow in dark nights.'

Here we enter upon a curious development of the simile of the cock. It has already been remarked that the Vulgate differs much from the Authorized Version in the book of Job. Neither the English nor the Septuagint has any mention of the cock in the Old Testament. The passage in Job here referred to is in the Vulgate xxxviii. 36, where we find, " Who hath given understanding to the cock ? " The simile of the cock is continued to the end of Book III.

'The teacher cries like a cock at night, when he says : " Now it is time for us to awake from sleep." And again when he says : " Awake, ye righteous, and sin no more." The habit of the cock is, that he sings much louder before than after dawn. But when day approaches, he sings more finely and delicately. So every wise teacher must preach open and clear doctrines to the dark minds, and not yet proclaim any secret and deep doctrine. But when he sees the dark clouds of foolish men approaching somewhat to the light of truth, he must display to them more secret and deeper doctrine out of the holy books.'

iii. 40 ; A. 64 : 'Of the teacher's works and words.

'It is now necessary that among other remarks we revert, out of love, to what we spoke of above. That is, that every teacher is to teach more with his works than his words. Why, the cock, whom we spoke of above, before he begins to crow, lifts his wings and arouses himself, that he may be wide awake with the zeal of good works, lest he arouse others with his words, and himself be remiss in good works. Let

him shake himself till he awake, and then stir up others to the zeal of good works ; let him flap himself with the wings of his thoughts. That is, he is first to investigate with the vigilance of his contemplation, what there is unprofitable in himself, and rebuke himself severely in his thoughts, and then with his instruction regenerate the life of others. First he must punish in himself his own evils, and repent of them, and then point out and punish those of others. First they must display in their own works all that they intend afterwards to teach with their words, so that the works may call before the words.'

For comparison with this representation of Alfred's rendering of the simile of the cock, we may give the corresponding parts of Mr. Bramley's rendering of the Latin.

iii. 39 ; A. 63 : "Deep things ought not to be preached at all to feeble souls.

"The cock is wont to utter a loud crowing in the deeper hours of the night ; but when the time of morning is already at hand, he maketh small and shrill noises : because, indeed, he that preacheth aright proclaimeth open truths to hearts that are yet in darkness, but declareth nothing concerning dark mysteries, to the end that they may hearken to all the subtle things concerning the kingdom of heaven, when they draw near to the light of truth."

iii. 40 ; A. 64 : "Concerning works and words of preaching.

"But in the midst of this we are turned back by the pursuit of charity to that which we have already said above, that every preacher should make a greater noise by his actions than by his words, and should leave the impress of his footsteps on his followers by living well, rather than point out by talking where they should walk. For the cock, likewise, which the Lord taketh to set forth the figure of a good preacher in his discourse, when he is even now preparing to crow, first clappeth his wings, and smiting himself rendereth himself more wakeful : for in truth those who exercise the words of holy preaching, must needs awake first by zeal for well-doing, that they may not arouse others by their speech, while they are in themselves sluggish in their works. First let them stir themselves up by lofty deeds, and then let them make others anxious for good living. First let them smite themselves with the wings of thought, let them find out

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by a careful search whatsoever in themselves lieth in useless torpor, and correct it by severe treatment ; and then at last let them order by their speech the lives of others. First let them take care to punish with tears their own offences, and then let them denounce what there is to be punished in other men ; and before they make the words of exhortation to sound, let them proclaim by their works all that they are about to speak."

Thus Alfred makes much more of the personality of the cock than Gregory does. We might have been sure that the King would lay hold of such a familiar and speaking illustration.

It should be added that the Hebrew word rendered as "cock" by the Vulgate is not found elsewhere in the Old Testament. It has been variously explained, by some to mean the mind, by others to mean a celestial appearance, as a meteor. Jerome's Hebrew teacher may have informed him that in late Hebrew it had come to mean a cock, probably as a herald of the dawn. The verse is part of a noble outburst on the almighty guidance of the stars and the lightnings and the clouds. The note of the Revised Version is evidently helpful, "Who hath put wisdom in the dark clouds, or who hath given understanding to the meteor?"

CHAPTER VI

How the preacher must not be puffed up—The Epilogue—Misunderstanding of "my reproof"—Alfred's charming Epilogue—Read as poetry by Professor Earle.

IN the concluding chapter of the whole work, which Gregory calls Book IV and Alfred calls Chapter 65, we may naturally expect to find Gregory himself and his communings with self, and his use of his own trials as a guide or a warning to others. And, equally naturally, we may expect to find little or nothing of Alfred, who was not a preacher.

The heading of the chapter in Alfred's version gives us an example of the care taken to add point and meaning to a phrase in itself more or less obscure. Gregory's heading is, "After what manner the preacher, having accomplished all things aright, cometh back unto himself, lest either his life or his teaching should set him up."

Alfred's version gives it thus,

'When any one has fulfilled all this, how he must bethink himself, and understand himself, lest either his life or his teaching set him up.'

It may be well to give the Latin :

"Qualiter prædicator omnibus rite perfectis ad semetipsum redeat ne hunc vel vita vel prædicatio extollat."

Gregory wrote thus :

"But since when preaching is poured forth abundantly in fitting ways, the mind of the speaker is often lifted up within him with a secret joy at the display of himself, there is need of great care to yield himself a prey to the pangs of fear : to the end, that he who by his medicines bringeth the wounds of others back to a state of health, be not himself inflamed through carelessness about his own health, that he forget not himself in helping others, nor fall by lifting them up. For to some the greatness of their virtue hath oft-times been the occasion of their destruction : so that being inordinately secure through their certainty of strength, they perished unexpectedly by their carelessness. For when virtue striveth

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against vices, the mind flattereth itself with a certain enjoyment : and so it cometh to pass that the soul of one who doeth well casteth away the fear that belonged to her state of circumspection, and resteth secure in her assurance of herself ; and when she is thus slothful the crafty tempter recounteth to her everything which she hath well done, and raiseth her aloft with swelling thoughts, as though she were superior to all other. Whence it is brought about that before the eyes of the just Judge the remembrance of virtue is a pit for the soul : for when, remembering that which she hath done she lifteth up herself within herself, in the eyes of the Author of lowliness she falleth."

The remainder of the Latin chapter, which is the conclusion of the *Pastoral Care*, may be left for representation to Alfred's rendering, to which we may now turn. We shall return to the Latin when we come to the interesting epilogue. It should be noted that Gregory does not give the numbers of the Psalms quoted.

'Often also the teachers are excited by secret joy when they see that they teach fitly and properly. But it is then very necessary for him quickly to wound himself with the fear of becoming elated at his eloquence ; lest while he cures the wounds of others, he himself be elated with pride through neglect of his salvation ; lest he forsake himself while he attends to his friends, and himself fall while he strive to raise others. Because often virtue and excellence prove the destruction of their possessor, when from recklessness he presumes too much on the virtues he has, and does not care to increase them ; then they prove his destruction, because virtues always contend against vices. But the mind often flatters itself, and with the flattery relinquishes the fear of its own reflections. Then the mind rests confidently in presumption. Then the cunning waylayer comes to the torpid mind, and recounts to it all its former good deeds, and makes him believe that he flourishes in virtues beyond all other men, until he becomes puffed up and elated in his mind. And then, in the eyes of the righteous Judge, the recollection of his virtues and excellence becomes a very deep pit, into which he falls very heavily, because he falls before the God who is the teacher of humility, when he exalts himself in his own eyes because of his virtues.

'The cunning enemy tempts every man with the pride of

good works, and even tempts the minds of the elect, although he cannot fully deceive them. For when any mind is elated, it is forsaken by God ; and as soon as it is forsaken by God, it is afflicted by fear of the devil. Therefore David said again in the twenty-ninth Psalm, "I thought in my pride and abundance, when I was full both of wealth and good works, that there would be no end of it." But when he saw he was inflated by the pride of his good works, he proclaimed very soon after what he afterwards suffered, saying : "Lord, thou turnedst thy countenance from me, and I was afflicted." As if he had openly said : "I thought I was strong in many virtues, but I very soon saw, after thou hadst forsaken me, how weak I was." And again he said in the hundred and eighteenth Psalm, "I swore, as I had determined, to hold thy judgments and righteousness, Lord ; revive me according to thy words, Lord." But he very quickly perceived, when he experienced affliction, that it was not in his own power to hold what he had promised and sworn. And then he soon had recourse to prayer, and sought help therein, saying : "I am humiliated on all sides and in everything, Lord." So the divine dispensation, before bestowing on a man virtue and excellence, often shows him his infirmity, and reminds him of his want of power, lest he be elated because of his virtues. Therefore also it was said to the prophet Ezekiel that he was the son of man, before the heavenly things were shown to him, as if God had openly admonished him, and said to him, "Be not too elated in thy mind because of the things thou seest, but consider cautiously what thou art, and though thou traverse the highest, do not forget that thou art man, but consider very carefully in thyself the bridle of thine infirmity, although thou art raised above thy condition." Therefore it is very necessary for us to direct the eye of our mind to the contemplation of our infirmity. When virtues and excellence most fully flatter us, it is very necessary for us to bow down humbly with our mind, and salutarily reflect on the good we have neglected, not on that which we have done ; that our mind may be so much the firmer and stronger in virtues in the sight of God, from the humility wherewith we wound it when we remember our heedlessness. Therefore Almighty God often lets the minds of his elect sin in some small things, although they are perfect in many, that they may fear, and be dispirited because of their imperfection, although they shine brightly in some

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admirable virtues ; that they may not exalt themselves too much on the strength of the great things while they cannot amend the little ; lest they presume to be proud of the noblest works, whilst they cannot subdue the most insignificant evils.'

Here the book ends. Gregory addresses a short epilogue to Bishop John of Ravenna, which Alfred's translator renders thus, inserting the words *thu goda wer Johannes*.

'See now, thou good man John, how fair and beautiful a character I have depicted, ugly painter as I am. In it I have shown what a pastor ought to be. I was compelled by thy blame to lead many men to the shore of perfection in the ship of my mind, while I myself am still tossed by the waves of my sins. But I pray thee to reach me a plank of thy prayers in the shipwreck of this present life, that I may sit on it till I come to land ; and raise me with the hand of thy merits, for the burden of my own sins hath oppressed me.'

The Latin gives Gregory's Epilogue in the following form :

"Behold, my good friend, constrained by the necessity of my reproof, and being intent to show what a Pastor ought to be, I a foul painter have portrayed a fair person ; and I direct others to the shore of perfection while I am yet tossing on the waves of transgression. But, I beseech thee, in this shipwreck of my life, do thou hold me up with the plank of thy prayers, that whereas my own weight maketh me to sink, the hand of thy worthiness may lift me up."

It will be seen that the modern translation has, at the beginning of this paragraph, "constrained by the necessity of my reproof," while Alfred's book has 'compelled by thy blame.' So far as the meaning is concerned, neither phrase appears to be consistent with the facts of the case. The Latin is *reprehensionis meæ necessitate compulsus*, so that the modern translation is verbally correct. But Alfred's phrase gives a simpler sense, and one more consistent with the relations between John and Gregory in connection with the origin of the *Pastoral Care*. It may be that it gives the real meaning of the phrase.

The reference has been supposed to be obscure, but it is in fact quite clear, and it is interesting. An epilogue should

naturally refer back to a prologue. Gregory began his prologue thus: "Thou reprovest me (*reprehendis me*) my dearest brother, with kind and humble intent, for wishing to escape the burdens of the Pastoral charge by hiding myself. That those burdens might not seem light to some, I am expressing in this book all that I think touching the weightiness thereof." The *reprehendis me* of the prologue is the clue to the *reprehensionis meæ* of the epilogue, "my blame" meaning "the blame which I incurred."

There is the same clear connexion in the Anglo-Saxon. In the Prologue,

'Thou, dearest brother, very friendlily and very profitably blamedst me (*me tældest*).'

In the Epilogue,

'I was compelled by thy blame (*tælnesse*).'

Most fortunately for us, Alfred, who had provided so intensely valuable a Preface to his book, provided also the following charming Epilogue.

'These are now the waters, which the God of Hosts promised as a solace to us earth-dwellers. He said that He wished in the world ever-living waters to flow from the hearts of those who believed in Him well under the sky. There is little doubt that the source of the waters is in the Kingdom of Heaven; that is, the Holy Ghost. Whence saints and the elect drew it, after those who had obeyed God had directed it through holy books on this earth through the minds of men variously. Some dam it within their minds, the stream of wisdom, hold it with their lips, so that it flows not out, to no purpose. But the well remains in the man's breast, by the grace of God, deep and still. Some let it flow away over the tract of land, in rivers. That is not a wise thing, if so pure water is dispersed in murmuring shallow streams over the fields, till it becomes a marsh. But draw water now to drink, since the Lord has granted that Gregory should direct to your doors the Lord's stream. Let him now fill his vessel, who has brought hither a watertight pitcher. Let him come back soon. If any man here has brought to this spring a leaky pitcher, let him repair it carefully, lest he spill the clearest of waters, or lose the drink of life.'

Professor Earle read the Anglo-Saxon as poetry, and rendered it thus¹:

¹ *The Alfred Jewel*, pp. 87-89.

This is now the watering
 which the world's Creator
 for refreshment promised
 us who till the field.
 He said it was His will
 that in the world thenceforth
 out of the inward soul
 waters aye enduring flow
 of loyal believers under heaven.

There is little doubt
 that of this watering
 the well-spring is
 in the heavenly kingdom ;
 for it is the Holy Ghost.
 From that fountain fetched it
 faithful men elect,
 and at length 'twas guided
 by hearers of God
 through holy books
 hither on earth
 men's minds to pervade
 in manners diverse.

Some warily keep in memory's ward
 wisdom's stream with closed lips.
 So that it fruitlessly
 flows not away :
 but the brooklet bideth
 in the man's breast
 through divine grace
 deep and still.
 Some let it at large
 over the land
 in rillets wide-running.
 Good rede is it not
 if water so lucid
 run shallow and loud
 flowing free over fields
 and turning to fen.

But draw now for your drinking
 now that your Lord

Gregorius to you gave,
and he hath guided
to your doors
the spring divine.
Fill each man now his vessel
if sound it be
the pail he brought :
come back for more anon.
If any lordling here
a leaky pail
brought to this burn,
make boot with zealous fear,
lest he should spill
the sparkling water
or of life's drink
depart forlorn.

BEDE'S ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH RACE

CHAPTER I

The manuscripts—Quotation from one MS. in 1450—Alfred's authorship
—Duplications of words and phrases in the Anglo-Saxon version of
Bede

THE Old English (Anglo-Saxon) version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English Race was printed in Cambridge in 1643-44 and in 1722. It was printed in Germany in 1897.

It was translated into modern English in the Jubilee edition of Alfred's translations and writings, 1852.

The Early English Text Society issued the whole Anglo-Saxon text, with translation and an introduction of great value, in 1890 and 1891, under the editorship of Dr. Thomas Miller, formerly a Fellow of Queens' College, Cambridge. Dr. Miller's Introduction and translation have been used freely in the following pages. The authorities of the Early English Text Society have most kindly granted permission to make free use of this invaluable work, as of all their other publications connected with Alfredian literature.

We have four manuscripts of this Anglo-Saxon version of *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English Race*, and some fragments of a fifth. They are known as T., C., B., O., Ca.

T. is the Tanner MS. 10 in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Five scribes were engaged upon this manuscript, the chief of whom shows scholarship and penmanship of a high order. The experts argue that the MS. was written in a small monastery, where the one really competent scribe could only get unskilled assistance. At one point where the rough-and-ready scribe was getting the lines much out of the horizontal, the skilled scribe wrote one line in his own beautiful writing

to show the assistant how it ought to be done, but the assistant made a very poor business of his attempt to write straighter and better.

From the writing, most authorities place this manuscript about the end of the tenth century. Dr. Miller favours a somewhat earlier date. It will be remembered that Alfred's reign lasted nearly thirty years, from 872 to 901. T. is defective at the beginning and at the end, and in one place seven leaves have been torn out.

C. is in the British Museum, Cotton Otho B. XI. This manuscript was burned in the fire of 1731. Its contents had been described by Dr. Smith (1696) and Wanley before the fire. It originally consisted of 231 leaves, and contained, besides the *History*, parts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and other writings. As in the case of others of the manuscripts "burned" in that terribly destructive fire, the charred fragments have been treated with loving care and skill, and are now mounted. There are 53 folios, of which 38 contain parts of Books 3, 4, and 5 of the *History*. Some of these are more or less continuous. In one case, where portions are defective in T. and O., the leaves 32-36 are continuous and hardly injured, and by their means we can supply in part the defect in T. and O. Further notes on this manuscript will be found in the account of the *Blooms of King Alfred*, p. 2. Like the only manuscript of the *Blooms*, it was in the library of the Priory of Southwyck.

In connexion with this manuscript C. we have, by a singular piece of good fortune, an opportunity of judging how far a knowledge of Anglo-Saxon script and its meaning had survived among English scholars so late as A.D. 1450.

Thomas Rudborne the younger, a monk of St. Swithun's, Winchester, wrote the *Historia Major Wintoniensis* in or about the year 1454. Wharton printed this in the first part of his *Anglia Sacra* in 1691.

In the 4th chapter of *Historia Major*, Wharton's *Anglia Sacra* I. 183, Rudborne describes the martyrdom of St. Alban. He describes the governor of Verulamium sending soldiers to search the house of one of the citizens, Albanus, who had been informed against as harbouring a Christian monk, concealed in his house. That Alban was martyred in a monk's dress, we are told, he says, by Bede, *de gestis Anglorum*, i. 7. But, he says further, I am speaking of the book which Bede wrote in the Saxon tongue *On the Doings of the English* for

Ceolwulph, King of the Northumbrians, a copy of which I had in the Priory of the Canons of Suthwyk, in which book is the following passage in Saxon :

tha scs ælbanus for thæm cwinan [in the margin Wharton prints "cuman "] thæ hæ gefeormædæ 7 his mægistræ gegær-ædæ hinæ thæ his munucan gægære-lanæ ; which in Latin he says means, *tunc sanctus Albanus pro ipsis prius venit ; et Magister suus informavit eum et stabilivit in Fide, et præstitit ei habitum suum Monachalem*. This tells us of the pagan Alban, that " his Master instructed him, and stablished him in the faith, and handed to him his monk's dress." How Rudborne made this to be the sense of the words, with the true Latin before him, it is not easy to see. But one thing seems clear, he made a guess at *gefeormadæ* and took it to mean *informed*. The word is a curious one. It may be roughly stated as " one who is farmed," that is, " feasted," or " fed," and thus a " guest." Our modern word " farm " is the same word as the Saxon *feorm*, and has come to be used of land which produces food. The Latin word *firma* is frequently used in the earliest Middle Ages as meaning hospitality. An ordinary charge on lands was the duty of " farming " the lord for a night or three nights.

Bede's Latin runs thus : *se sanctus Albanus hospite ac magistro suo ipsius habitu, id est caracalla qua vestiebatur, indutus, militibus exhibuit*. Miller's Anglo-Saxon text runs thus : tha scs Albanus for tham cumān, the he gefeormade, gegyrede hine tha his munucge-gyrelan. Dr. Miller renders rather than translates this as follows : " St. Alban put on the monk's dress, substituting himself for the stranger who was his guest."

I do not find any reference to a different reading of the Latin, or of the Anglo-Saxon. The mistakes in copying are obvious ; but it would appear that the manuscript itself differed from both of the manuscripts used by Dr. Miller by the presence of *Magistræ*. Unfortunately the early part of the Southwyk manuscript, Otho B. xi, was completely destroyed by fire. Several hands are found in the parts that remain, and on the whole the *a*, and *e*, and *æ*, are very clearly written. But there are pages in a hand which is less clear, and it may be that this hand wrote the passage quoted, and misled Rudborne. The fact that Otho B. XI represented the Latin *ac Magistro*, and neither of the existing early MSS. does represent it, is remarkable.

B. is at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, No. 41. Two

scribes, if not three, were engaged upon it. The general hand is fine and bold, rougher at first, but improving as the book goes on. The *Bede* occupies 483 pages; then follows a homily in a later hand, occupying four or five pages; and then an inscription in Latin and English, "This book gave Leofric bishop to St. Peter's minster at Exeter." There is a similar inscription at the end of Leofric's *Book of the Gospels* in the University Library, Cambridge, a MS. written in large and elegant characters, those of B. being somewhat larger and less refined. Leofric became Bishop of Crediton twenty years before the Norman Conquest, and died Bishop of Exeter in 1072.

Dr. Miller remarks that this manuscript of *Bede* is not mentioned among the manuscripts in the list of Leofric's benefactions in the *Codex Exoniensis*: but adds that we may fairly take the inscription as fixing the date of the MS. about the time of the Conquest. Leofric might have become possessed of a copy of the *Bede* made a century before his time, but the experts do not appear to favour this view.

The scribe claims at the end of the manuscript to have written it all with his own hand. This caused further examination to be made, for it is quite evidently not all in one hand. The explanation is that the manuscript is in two main portions, the first portion containing thirteen quaternions and one leaf, the other eighteen quaternions. The scribe's claim to have written the whole referred to his portion, not to the whole MS. The illumination work, as well as the writing, differs in the two portions. On palæographical grounds Sir George Warner dates the beautiful writing about A.D. 1030 to 1040.

O. is at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, No. 279. It is defective at the beginning, twenty-four chapters missing, and at the end, four chapters missing. No other leaves are missing; but it was copied from a MS. in which two, or three, folios were missing. The same is the case with the manuscript next to be mentioned, Ca.; in neither case does the scribe show any consciousness of the omission. A great many scribes were employed on this manuscript O., all of them skilful; sometimes a new hand appears for a few lines only. It is evidently the work of a famous scriptorium, with many skilled writers. It is a very fine manuscript, but its appearance is spoiled by a large number of erasures, interlineations, and alterations of grammatical forms, the

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latter probably showing that south-country scribes were working from an Anglian original. Many of the alterations are in the same hand and the same ink as the original.

Ca. is in the Cambridge University Library, Kk. 3, 18. This manuscript is complete, except for the unnoticed omission mentioned under O. On the first page is a couplet in vermillion, which is repeated on the last page,

*Historicus quondam fecit me Beda latinum
Ælfred rex Saxo transtulit ille pius.*

It contains the West Saxon genealogy which is not found in B. The whole is written in the same neat hand. Wanley placed its date as about the date of the Conquest, making it coeval with B. Dr. Miller is inclined to put it a little later.

The evidence of Alfred's authorship is at least fairly trustworthy. *Ælfric's Homily on St. Gregory* refers to Bede's *Historia Anglorum*, "which Alfred translated out of Latin into English."

A very careful examination of grammatical forms and vowel spellings enabled Dr. Miller to class these manuscripts under the head of districts in which they were copied. A later and very interesting example of the spelling or misspelling of place names supported the conclusions arrived at, and naturally enabled a closer classification. The combined results can be summarized as follows :

T. originated in South Mercia. It is the most archaic of the manuscripts, and is of the tenth century. C. comes from South Mercia, O. from the west of Mercia ; both are on the confines of the tenth and eleventh centuries. Ca. is a copy of O. by a hand from the borders of south-west Mercia, in the eleventh century. B. is associated with Hants, has eleventh-century spelling, and a certain affinity with later MSS. of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Ca. may be credited to the scriptorium of Malmesbury. The absence of connexion with the West-Saxon land is quite in accordance with the statement that Alfred could not find learned men for his work in his own country and sought them elsewhere, especially in Mercia.

A special feature of the Anglo-Saxon version of *Bede* is brought out in one of the papers in *An English Miscellany*, a volume presented to Dr. F. J. Furnivall on reaching his

seventy-fifth year, ten years before his death. The paper was written by J. M. Hart, of Cornell University, pages 150-154 of the volume referred to, under the title "Rhetoric in the Translation of Bede." The main point is that in a large number of cases the Anglo-Saxon translator uses two words or phrases where the Latin has only one. Sometimes a marginal note may have been incorporated in the text. Sometimes there are alternative renderings, possibly written as such to begin with, and left standing at the final revision. In other cases there is a certain amount of difference in meaning, and in those cases the scribe may have thought it better to give the two words or phrases to make sure that he is representing the meaning. Or again, there are cases where duplication gives additional emphasis; and presumably the title of the paper, "Rhetoric in the Translation of Bede," is founded on these cases. Professor Chadwick, the Professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Cambridge, has very kindly helped me to appreciate the force of a number of these amplifications.

For our present purpose, it will be sufficient to follow Professor Hart in his collection of cases from *Bede*, i. 27, the Interrogations of Augustine and the Answers of Gregory. In a few cases I had called attention to reduplications here and elsewhere before I had heard of Professor Hart's work.

The First Answer. "He endeavoured to show him": A.S., he earnestly directed and taught him. "For the repair of God's churches": A.S., for the repair and improvement of God's churches. "Instructed": A.S., trained and taught. "Clerics": A.S., Priests and servants of God. "To be spent": A.S., to be devoted and given. "Over": A.S., over and above.

The Second Answer. "The custom of the Roman Church": A.S., the worship and customs of the Roman Church. "It pleases me": A.S., it seems to me and I prefer.

The Third Answer. "Not from anger": A.S., not in passion or hot temper.

The Fourth Answer. "This may by all means be done": A.S., this may be so, and is in every way allowable.

The Sixth Answer. "Jointly pour forth their prayers": A.S., make prayer and send up their petitions together.

The Eighth Answer. "The immortality which they had

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received": A.S., which they had received and were created in. It will be observed that this is much more than a mere duplication.

An example of exactly opposite treatment has been noted at an earlier stage of this chapter, where the two Anglo-Saxon manuscripts on which our text is based omit "and master" from Bede's statement concerning Alban's *guest and master*.

CHAPTER II

Connexion of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* with Alfred's version of *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*—The genealogies of the West Saxon kings—Description of Britain in the *Chronicle* and the *History*—Ireland not described in the *Chronicle*—The British Isles in *Orosius*—The Bretwaldas

THE connexion of King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon version of *Bede's Ecclesiastical History* with the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, in the origination and compilation of which the King is understood to have had considerable share, is a question of the very highest interest. To enter upon it at any length would be beyond the scope of the present book. Dr. Charles Plummer has edited Professor Earle's book on the *Chronicle* in two admirable volumes (Clarendon Press). He makes a valuable remark on the comparatively small though actually considerable extracts from Bede in the *Chronicle*, by defining the difference between a Chronicle and a history. Many passages of *Bede's History* which from their value should appear in the *Chronicle* are of necessity excluded, because Bede does not attach a date to them, and anything that appears in a chronicle must appear under a date.

The *Saxon Chronicle* begins with the invasion of Julius Cæsar, and ends with the accession of Henry II in 1154. The best manuscript, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, No. 173, is written in one hand straight through to the year 891, at which date it is fair to suppose that it was written. Its connexion with *Bede's History* was stated by Thorpe in his book on the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Rolls Series, A.D. 1861. He remarks that from the beginning of the *Chronicle* to the death of Bede, A.D. 734, we are enabled to form a judgment as to the sources whence much of its matter is derived; but from that date until the time of Ælfred (or about a hundred and fifty years) we know not from what materials the narrative was compiled.

Two special points in the evidence of a direct connexion between Alfred's version of *Bede's History* and the *Saxon Chronicle* may be mentioned here.

There is appended to Alfred's version of the *History*,

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after Bede's concluding words, a genealogy of the West Saxon kings from Cerdic to Alfred himself, with Cerdic's descent from Woden. A descent from Woden sometimes provokes a smile; but under the protection of the bards much longer descents than that were safe and may be supposed to have been accurate. Woden's own descent was carried by the bards far back, up to and beyond the times of the wars of the Romans with the Teutonic tribes. Hengest, A.D. 451, was counted the fourth in descent from Woden. Eleven ascending generations from Woden would bring the bards to Arminius in the Teutoburgensian wood and *Quintili Varc legiones redde!* That is not a long stretch for memories specially trained for this very purpose.

The genealogy appended to Alfred's version of *Bede's History* had evidently been brought up to date more than once. It had once ended with "then Beorhtric succeeded to the kingdom, whose kin reaches to Cerdic." Then was added, "and held it sixteen years, and Ecgbryht [Ecgbert] succeeded to the kingdom." Then came, "and held it thirty-seven winters and seven months and then Ethelwulf his son succeeded and held it eighteen years and a half." The death of Ethelwulf in 856 brought upon the scene his four sons, all of whom reigned, Alfred being the youngest. But before they are named, Ethelwulf's descent from Cerdic is stated in full detail. This was of real importance, for Alfred's descent from Cerdic did not come down through the line of the West Saxon kings. He descended from the oldest son of the second West Saxon king, Cynric; but the kingly line came for the most part from younger sons of Cynric.

Having thus established his father as the lineal descendant of Cerdic, Alfred the chronicler and historian proceeded with the genealogy in the *Chronicle* as follows: 'Then Ethelbald Ethelwulf's son succeeded to the kingdom and held it five years. Then Ethelbryht his brother succeeded and held it five years. Then Ethered their brother succeeded to the kingdom and held it five years. Then Alfred their brother succeeded to the kingdom: and then were passed of his age 23 winters, and 396 winters since his kin first conquered the West Saxons land from the Welsh' [Wealum]. Cerdic's reign is dated as beginning in the year 495, and this brings the conclusion of the genealogy to the year 891. It seems very difficult to doubt that we have in this record Alfred's own hand. It is a specially interesting fact that the Cam-

bridge Corpus Christi manuscript of the *Chronicle* is written throughout in one and the same hand up to this same year 891. This is curiously in accord with the tradition that the *Chronicle* was originally compiled from a collection of earlier chronicles in the later days of Alfred's reign, and by the help, possibly by the hand, of Plegmund the Archbishop.

Besides this genealogy at the end of Alfred's *Bede*, there is a corresponding genealogy of the West Saxon kings prefixed to the Corpus Christi Cambridge manuscript of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, No. 173, not as a preface but as a separate document. Another genealogy, with only very slight differences, has been found on a leaf bound up with other Anglo-Saxon manuscripts in the British Museum, Tib. A. III. Inasmuch as it carries the genealogy down to Edward, son of Edgar, it is printed in Mr. Thorpe's edition of the *Chronicles* under the year 978.

The linguistic differences among these three genealogies are on the whole minute. But there are differences also in regard to the succession of the kings of the West Saxons. It would occupy considerable space to discuss them and offer explanations. Our present purpose is to show the kinship of Alfred's *Bede* with one or other of the two texts of the genealogy in the *Saxon Chronicle*. The pedigree prefixed to the *Chronicle*, Corpus Christi 173, gives the earliest kings and the years of their reign as follows: 1. Cerdic 16; 2. Cynric 17; 3. Ceol 6; 4. Ceolwulf 17; 5. Cynegils 31; 87 years in all. The single leaf gives 1. Cerdic 16; 2. Cynric 26; 3. Ceaulin 17; 4. Ceol 5; 5. Ceolwulf 17; 6. Cynegils 20; 101 years in all. Alfred's *Bede* gives 1. Cerdic 16; 2. Cynric 27; 3. Ceaulin 7; 4. Ceol 6; 5. Ceolwulf 17; 6. Cynegils 32; 105 years in all. Thus Alfred's *Bede* agrees on the whole with the Cotton Tib. A. III, against the Corpus Christi 173.

There is agreement and disagreement on another point in the pedigree. As an illustration of the point, we may take the pedigree of King George up to the Stewarts and the Tudors. If we take merely the succession of sovereigns, we have in ascending scale George I, Anne, William and Mary, James II, Charles II, Charles I, James I, Elizabeth, Mary, Henry VIII. Our present King's personal pedigree through all those reigns is quite clear; but he does not personally descend from any of those sovereigns except George I and James I. Alfred's case was even more curious than that.

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After the succession of the West Saxon sovereigns given in the *Chronicles* and histories, a list is given showing Alfred's lineal descent from Cerdic the first of the West Saxon kings. The *Corpus Christi MS.* 173 gives on the last step upwards, "Cynric was son of Cerdic." The two other genealogists give the step thus: "Cynric was son of Creoda, Creoda of Cerdic"; as Alfred puts it in his *Bede*, 'Cyneric Creoding, Creodda Cerdicing.' Creoda the son of Cerdic and father of Cynric did not reign as sovereign. He is known to us from William of Malmesbury and the *Textus Roffensis*. He is also named in this position in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* under the year 855, not in the *Corpus MS.* 173 but in the *Cotton MS.* Tib. A. VI, a serious support to the belief that the single leaf in Tib. A. III belongs to Tib. A. VI. The record for that year 855 is of great importance in itself, and was of the deepest interest to Alfred; for it told that in that year his father King Ethelwulf "chartered the tenth part of his land over all his kingdom for the glory of God and his own eternal salvation and he the same year went to Rome with great pomp." The *Corpus MS.* 173 has the whole of this account, as have four of the chief MSS. of the *Chronicle*; it is the only one that omits Creoda.

The other special point of connexion between the *Chronicle* and Alfred's *Bede* has relation to the description of the island Britain.

The *Saxon Chronicle* opens with a summary of the first chapter of *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English Race* to the following effect:

"The island of Britain is 800 miles long and 200 miles broad: and here are in the island five peoples: English, Brito-Welsh, Scottish, Pictish, and Book-Latin.¹ The first inhabiting this land were Britons; they came from Armenia.² They first settled southward in Britain. It then befel that Picts came from the south from Scythia³ with long ships, not many; and they first landed in north Ireland, and there prayed

¹ Another MS. has English, British, Welsh, Scottish, Pictish.

² All of the three best MSS. have this error. *Bede* has *de tractu Armoricano advecti*, from Armorica, the north-western part of Gaul. Alfred, with his usual difficulty about oblique cases in the Latin, says *from Armoricano*.

³ The authors of the *Chronicle* inserted the word *sucian*, "from the south." The Scythia of the legend is now known to have been in the far north, high up in Scandinavia. The insertion of the word *suthan* may be due to the fact that in *Bede's Latin* it is said that the ships were driven by the winds beyond the bounds of Britain, whence Alfred's *Bede* put it that they passed round the whole British coast and came to Ireland.

the Scots¹ that there they might live. But they would not allow them, for they said they could not all dwell together there. And then said the Scots: "We can, however, give you counsel. We know another island, here to the east, where ye may dwell if ye will; and if any one withstand you, we will aid you, so that ye may subdue it." Then the Picts went and conquered this land northward; southward the Britons had it as we have said. And the Picts obtained them wives from the Scots, on the condition that they should ever choose their royal race on the woman's side, which they have held so long since. And it then befel, after a course of years, that some part of the Scots withdrew from Ireland into Britain, and subdued some part of the land. And their leader was called Reoda, from whence they are named Dalreodi.² Dal, Bede adds, meaning a part, a portion or division."

This summary omits the whole of the highly interesting description of Britain and of Ireland which is found in the original Latin of Bede and also in Alfred's version. Alfred, or his compilers, may well have supposed that the English people knew England, and for his purpose in compiling the *Chronicle* did not need to be informed of such details as crops, cattle, birds, fish, salt, hot springs, copper, iron, and jet, all of which had been told of by Bede, quoting from other authors, who were not English and were not writing for English people. All the account of the five languages, and the quaint account of the Picts and their Scottish wives, were far beyond the natural knowledge of the Englishman of his time. The compiler of the English *Chronicle* judged it right to give this in full in his summary. When the summary in the *Chronicle* is carefully considered in its relation to Bede's Latin and Alfred's English *Bede*, it is fairly evident that it is taken from Alfred's *Bede*, not independently translated from the Latin.

There are arguments on the other side. For example, we have seen in the summary that the Britons came from Armenia, whereas Bede says *de tractu Armoricano*. It may fairly be asked, Why should Armenia be mentioned at all? What did the summarizer know of Armenia? Alfred has no mention of Armenia; but Bede's Latin has. When we

¹ The people of Ireland were the Scots, a fact which has led to many mistakes.

² Bede says they were called Dalreudini. Their modern name is Dalriads. Alfred, as we shall see, gives them the familiar Saxon termination *ing*, the Dalreadings.

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come to the discussion of the comparative lengths of day and night in different latitudes, Alfred contrasts Britain with 'the southern parts of the world.' Bede contrasts Britain with "Armenia, Macedonia, Italy." We may surmise that the *Chronicle's* summarizer, seeing *de tractu Armoricano* and *Armenia* in one and the same document, wrote "Armenia" for Armorica, thinking they referred to the same territory.

Alfred's English version of Bede's first chapter, translated, it should be remembered, some hundred and sixty or seventy years after Bede wrote it, is as follows:

' Britain is an island in the ocean, formerly called Albion, lying between the north and the west, opposite, though far apart, to Germany, Gaul, and Spain, the chief divisions of Europe. It runs northward for 800 miles, and is 200 miles broad. It has on the south, opposite to it, Gallia Belgica. The island is rich in crops and trees of various kinds, and it is suited for grazing sheep and cattle, and vineyards¹ are grown in some places. This land also produces birds of various kinds and marine animals and springs and rivers full of fish. Seals, whales, and porpoises are often caught here, and various kinds of shell-fish and mussels are commonly taken, and in these are often found the finest pearls of every colour. There is also here abundance of molluscs, from which is made the dye of "shell-fish red"; this neither the sun can bleach nor the rain mar, and it grows fairer with age. The land also has salt-pits and hot water, and hot baths in various localities, suitable for every age and both sexes; it also produces ores of copper and iron, lead and silver, in masses. Jet is also found here, which is a black gem; if put in the fire, adders fly from it.

' Formerly this island was also embellished with the noblest of towns, twenty-nine in number, furnished with walls, towers, gates, and the strongest of locks, besides countless other towns of smaller size. As this island lies very close under the north of the world, and the nights here are light in summer, so that often at midnight a question arises among the spectators whether it is the evening gloaming or morning dawn; by this it is clear that the days are much

¹ Win-gearda. The "Vinegar" Bible is supposed to have "vinegar" as a misprint for "vineyard"; but it is merely the "vinegarth," as "conygar" is the coneygarth or rabbit warren.

longer in this island in summer, and also the nights in winter, than in the southern parts of the world.

'At this present time the island acknowledges one and the same science of sublime truth and true sublimity in the tongues of five nations, according to the number of the five books of Moses in which the Divine law is written, that is, in the tongues of the English, Britons, Scots, Picts (Peohta), and Latins. This one, the Latin, is common to all the others in the study of the Scriptures. At the very first, the Britons were the sole inhabitants of this island, which received its name from them. They, it is said, came in to Britain from the province of Armorica,¹ and occupied and appropriated the southern parts of the island. Subsequently it happened that the Picts came in ships from Scythia, and passed round the whole British coast, till they landed in Ireland.'

We can pass over the description of the arrival of the Picts as already given. Alfred's *Bede* proceeds: 'In the course of time, next after the Britons and the Picts, a third race, that of the Scots, occupied Britain within the borders of the Picts. They came from Ireland, the island of the Scots, with their leader by name Reada, and partly on friendly terms, partly after a struggle, secured for themselves a settlement and dwelling-place among them, which they still hold. Up to this day the race is called Dalreadings.'

The *Chronicle* does not describe Ireland; Alfred's *Bede* naturally does. The account is very graphic.

'Ireland, the island of the Scots, is far superior to Britain in the breadth of its conformation and in salubrity and mildness of climate, so that snow seldom lies there more than three days. No one there mows hay or builds stalls for his cattle, as a provision against winter's cold. No poisonous reptile is to be seen there, nor indeed may any viper live there; for vipers have been brought on board ship from Britain, but they died as soon as they smelled the air of the land. Besides, almost everything from that country is efficacious against all poisons. In proof of this, men have been seen who were bitten by vipers; shavings have been taken from leaves of books brought over from Ireland and put into water and given to the men to drink, and at once

¹ See pages 188, 189.

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the poison was overpowered, and the men were cured. The island is rich in milk and honey, and vineyards grow in some places. It abounds in fish and fowl, and is famous for hunting the hart and the roe. This is the proper home of the Scots; hence came that third race of Scots mentioned above as dwelling in Britain along with Britons and Picts.'

Alfred here omits the concluding paragraph of Bede's account, which has an interest of its own. It should be given here.

"There is a very large gulf of the sea, which formerly divided the nation of the Picts from the Britons, which gulf runs from the west very far into the land, where to this day stands the strong city of the Britons called Alcluith. The Scots arriving on the north side of this bay settled themselves there."

It was a true instinct which led the King to avoid a translation of this passage. The question of the southern Picts on the west coast above the Solway Firth is a difficult one. The Picts of Caledonia were divided into Northern Picts and Southern Picts. The Southern Picts, properly so called, occupied the eastern part of Caledonia, from the Grampians to the Forth, having the Scots of Argyllshire on the west of them, separated by the range of hills known as Drumalban. These Scots had Picts and Britons south of them, the Picts to whom Ninian preached (page 215).

Bede used the works of various writers in the compilation of the earliest part of his first chapter. Dr. Plummer gives references to Pliny, Gildas, Solinus, Orosius. We have Alfred's Anglo-Saxon version of *Orosius*, and it may be well to give here, as well as in our account of Alfred's *Orosius*, the actual words of the King's version respecting our islands.

'The island Britain extends a long way north-east. It is 800 miles long and 200 miles broad.¹ On the south of it, and on the other side of the arm of the sea, is Gallia Belgica; and on the west part, on the other side of the sea, is the island Hibernia; and on the north part the Orkney islands, Orcadus. Ireland, which we call Scotland, is on every side

¹ It is Solinus who adds the circumference, rather darkly, *quadrigies octies LXXV milia*. This is variously interpreted; 4875 is one solution.

surrounded by the ocean; and because it is nearer the setting of the sun than the other lands, the weather is milder there than in Britain. Then on the north-west of Ireland is that outmost land called Thule, and it is known to few because of its great distance.'

Bede's panegyric on Æthelbert, King of Kent (ii. 5), presented more than one point on which Alfred must have been tempted to comment, especially the code of laws. If he was tempted he resisted the temptation.

'Then about six hundred and sixteen years after the incarnation of our Lord, that was about one-and-twenty years after Augustine and his companions were sent to teach the people of England, Æthelberht King of Kent, after gloriously ruling the temporal kingdom for fifty-six years, now ascended with joy to the Kingdom of heaven. He was the third among the Kings of England who ruled over all the southern provinces¹ and held sway as far as the river Humber. Ælle, King of the South Saxons, was the first who had authority of this kind. The second was a King of the West Saxons called Ceawlin.² The third was as we have already said, Æthelberht, King of Kent. The fourth was Redwald, King of the East Angles. The fifth was Eadwine, King of Northumbria,³ who had authority over all Britain, Kent excepted. He also brought under the authority of the English the British Monige islands,⁴ seated between Ibernia Scotland and Britain. The sixth who had authority within these limits was Oswald, the best and most Christian King of Northumbria. The seventh was his brother Oswio, who also overran in great part the land of the Picts and Scots and made them tributary. Then King Æthelberht died, one-and-twenty years after receiving baptism and the Christian faith, and was buried in the church of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, in St. Martin's porch, and Beorhte his queen is also buried there.'

This account is copied into the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*

¹ "that are divided from the northern by the River Humber and the borders contiguous to it; but the first of all that ascended to the heavenly Kingdom," Bede says.

² "Caelin, King of the West Saxons, who in their own language is called Ceaulin." Bede.

³ "of the Northumbrian nation, that is, of those who live in the district to the north of the river Humber; his power was greater; he had the overlordship over all the nations that inhabit Britain, both English and British, except only the kingdom of Kent." Bede.

⁴ "the Mevanian islands of the Britons." Bede.

under the year 827. Out of compliment to Alfred, as we must suppose, the *Chronicle* adds, "the eighth was Ecgbryht," Alfred's father, ordinarily called the first King of all England. Neither Bede nor Alfred uses the word Bretwalda as the title of these successive overlords. The *Chronicle* calls them Bretwalda, the several manuscripts differing in the spelling of the word.¹

Continuing to speak of Æthelbert, Alfred says : ' Among other blessings which the King by wise deliberation conferred on his people, he also drew up after the Roman model, with the advice of experienced men, codes of just decisions, and ordered them to be written in English ; and these are still kept and observed among them up to the present. In these he first set down what reparation is to be made by the man who steals church property or the property of a bishop and other ecclesiastical orders. He wished to provide protection for those from whom he received instruction.'

This reference to the abiding force of the Dooms of King Ethelbert, made by Bede more than a hundred years after Ethelbert's death, might well have drawn a remark from the author of the Laws of King Alfred.

' This Æthelbert,' Alfred continues, ' was the son of Eormanric, whose father was Octa ; Octa's father was Oeric, surnamed Æsc, from whom the Kings of Kent were called Æscings. The father of this Æsc was that Hengest who was the first leader and general of the English in Britain.' Alfred omits Bede's reference here to the invitation of Vortigern.

¹ See my *Venerable Bede* (1919), p. 29.

CHAPTER III

✓ Alfred's treatment of Bede's Preface—His version of the questions of Augustine and the answers of Gregory—The income of a diocese—Alfred's last will and testament in this connexion—The principle of a National Church, as free to make its own customs—Boethius on this point—The consecration of the first English bishops—A serious difference of reading—The bishops of the British and the Gallican churches. ✓

BEDE wrote a highly interesting preface to his *Ecclesiastical History of the English Race*. It consisted of four parts, (1) a dedication to King Ceolwulf of Northumbria, (2) a list of authorities, (3) an *apologia* if errors should be discovered, (4) a request for the prayers of his readers. At the very end of the whole book there is (5) a very touching prayer to the Saviour of mankind. King Alfred begins his version with the dedication, which he makes simple and pithy ; he gives the list of authorities, complete ; he cuts the *apologia* very short ; the request for prayers he transfers to the end of the book, appending it to the prayer to the Saviour.

His pithy version of the dedication runs as follows :

‘ I Beda, Christ’s servant and mass-priest, send greeting to the well-beloved King Ceolwulf. And I send you the history which I lately wrote about the Angles and Saxons, for yourself to read and examine at leisure and to copy out and impart to others more at large. And I have confidence in your zeal, because you are very diligent and inquiring as to the sayings and doings of men of old ; and above all, of the famous men among our people. For this book either speaks good of the good, and the hearer imitates that, or it speaks evil of the evil, and the hearer flees and shuns the evil. For it is good to praise the good and blame the bad, that the hearer may profit. If your hearer be reluctant, how would he else gain instruction ? For your profit and for your people this have I written ; for thee God chose out to be king, thee it behoves to instruct the people. And that there may be less doubt that this book is true, I will state the sources whence this story came.’

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The list of authorities is, of course, of very high interest in itself. Bede tells us who they were in each province of the Angles and the Saxons that gave him all the information they had of the earliest beginnings of Christianity in the province. The chief source of information was naturally Canterbury. Albinus, the first English abbat of the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul there, both wrote much information to Bede and also sent to him Nothelm, the head mass-priest of London, charged with information to be given orally. Curiously enough, Alfred omits a very important fact in this connexion. After Nothelm's visit to Jarrow, he went to Rome, where Pope Gregory allowed him to search the records and to take copies of the letters that had passed between England and Rome, which Bede then included in his history. These letters, thus acquired, are among the very most important possessions of the "Church of the English," as Pope Gregory named us. The omission of this fact is one among many evidences of minute care in editing Alfred's version. As we shall see shortly, he does not include these valuable letters in his *Bede*, and so does not mention them.

This list raised a point which Alfred had to settle, we might have supposed, once for all. It appears and reappears throughout the history. Bede tells us that the early facts relating to the province of the West Saxons were communicated to him by the most reverend Bishop Daniel, "who is still living." Alfred was faced by the fact that Daniel, the bishop of his own special province, had been dead a hundred and fifty years. Was he to act as an historian or as a translator of history? He loyally stuck to his text, and followed Bede in saying that Daniel 'now yet living is.' He did not in all cases follow that rule.

The *apologia*, as we have said, he cut very short. Bede puts it thus: "I humbly entreat the reader, if he shall find in these our writings anything not rendered according to the truth, that he will not lay the blame of it on me, for, as the true rule of history requires, withholding nothing, I have laboured to commit to writing such things as I could gather from common report, for the instruction of posterity." The King thus: 'I now humbly beg and entreat the reader that if he find or hear this otherwise he will not blame me.'

The request for the prayers of the reader is a close rendering of Bede's original. Alfred, as has been said, joins it

on to the prayer with which Bede ended his history, that prayer forming the first sentence of the following passage :

‘To Thee I pray, O gentle Jesus, that he to whom Thou hast granted the enjoyment of draughts of divine knowledge may some time come to Thee, the fount of all wisdom, and in Thy presence ever be. Now also I humbly pray of all to whom this history of our race may come, either as readers or as hearers, that they oft and earnestly pray to the divine goodness of God Almighty for my infirmities of mind and body, and grant me in each of their provinces this mead of reward, that I, who have zealously endeavoured to write about the several provinces and the famous places what I believed to be memorable or acceptable to their inhabitants, may obtain among all the fruit of pious intercession.’

The request for the prayers of the reader comes better here than at the beginning of the book. But we must not credit Alfred with this improvement. As will be seen later, there are differences between the two very earliest manuscripts of the Latin text, both apparently dating from Bede's lifetime, two editions as it were. It is clear that Alfred had the edition which, among greater differences, has the prayer in the place where Alfred puts it.

After this, the genealogy of the West Saxon kings from Cerdic to Alfred's own self completed the conclusion of Alfred's version of *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English Race*.

This is probably the best place to give the delightfully simple, modest, and touching account of himself and of his works, that Bede wrote at the end of his history and as the preface to the list of his books. Alfred translates it very sympathetically, and we take his version.

‘These things concerning the history of the Church of England in Britain, as far as I could formerly learn it from the writings of men of old, or from the tradition of elder men, or from my own knowledge, with the help of the Lord I Bede have written, who am Christ's servant and mass-priest in the monastery of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul at Wearmouth and in Jarrow. I was born on land which is private property of this monastery. When I was seven

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years old, by the care of my kindred I was given over to be brought up and trained by the venerable abbat Benedict and afterwards by Ceolfrith. And I spent the whole time of my life afterwards in the precincts of the monastery ; and I gave all zeal to study and to meditate on Holy Scripture. And while observing regular discipline, with the daily charge of singing in church, it was ever sweet and delightful to me to study, teach, or write. And then in the nineteenth year of my life I entered on the diaconate, and at thirty on the mass-priesthood, in both cases by the ministration of the venerable Bishop John at the bidding and direction of abbat Ceolfrith.¹ From the time that I entered upon the mass-priesthood till the fifty-ninth year of my life, for my own needs and those of my friends I have written and composed these books out of the works of the venerable fathers, and I have also added thereto conformably to the sense and ghostly meaning.'

The list contains thirty-seven items, the whole of the lengthy Church History forming only one item. The first eight items, which do not include the History, yield twenty-six books. The whole of the writings occupy twelve octavo volumes in Dr. Giles's edition.

The inquiring mind of Alfred would find much that was of interest, and something of practical value, in the questions which Augustine addressed to Gregory after his consecration at Arles as archbishop, and the answers which Gregory sent ; questions and answers which were afterwards issued as a separate treatise.

To Alfred, who gave to the English Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, all questions about bishops had a special interest. It has been made a charge against him that he kept bishoprics vacant, holding the property of the bishopric during the vacancy ; and the answer has been that he would not have a bishopric filled unless there was a good man at hand to fill it. The first words of Augustine's first question, *De episcopis* (*Of bishops*), were enough to call his special attention to this treatise, which occupies a long chapter (xxvii) of the First Book of *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English Race*. This was the question, as Alfred puts it :

' First as to the bishops. How shall they conduct them-

¹ This is a literal translation of the Latin. It may be wondered whether it points to something like the Irish and Culdee relation between abbat and bishop.

selves and live with their clergy? And in the gifts of the faithful, which they bring to the altars and God's church, how many shares shall be made?'

'Quoth he: Holy Writ states this, which I doubt not you know well, and especially the epistle of the blessed Paul which he wrote to Timothy, in which he earnestly directed and taught him how he should behave and act in God's house.

'Now it is the custom of the apostolical see, when consecrating bishops, to give them directions, that four shares shall be made of all the maintenance that is provided for them; one first for the bishop and his household to entertain and receive guests and strangers, a second share for God's servants, a third for the poor, the fourth for the repair and improvement of God's churches. But yet, as you my brother have been trained and taught in monasterial discipline, you shall not dwell apart from your clergy in the English church,¹ which is but lately brought over to God's faith. You shall establish the mode of life and conduct which our fathers followed in the beginning of the rising church, among whom none maintained that anything they possessed was their separate own, but they all had all things in common. If then any priests and servants of God, not included in the holy brotherhoods,² cannot live without wives, let them take to them wives and receive a maintenance without. For it is written of those fathers of whom we have already spoken, that they distributed their worldly property to individuals as each had need. Also with regard to their maintenance, care and caution is necessary, that they may live morally under church discipline, for singing psalms and attending vigils, and that they should keep their hearts, tongues, and bodies, in the sight of God Almighty pure from all that is unlawful. What are we to say about those who share in the common life as to their distribution of alms, their practising hospitality, and showing compassion? For all that remains over of their worldly goods is to be devoted and given to the pious and good, for as Christ the Lord and teacher of us all directed, What is over and above give as alms, and all things are clean unto you.'

In his concluding sentence Alfred supports himself by quoting the Latin text of St. Luke xi. 41, as Bede did, *Quod*

¹ One word with Alfred, *in Ongolcirca*.

² See next page.

superest date eleemosynam. This is the reading of the Vulgate. The *quod superest* is not in direct accordance with the Greek, but the actual force of the Greek is not certain. Our Authorized Version has 'give alms of such things as ye have,' and in the margin 'as you are able'; the Revised Version has 'those things that are written,' and in the margin 'which ye can.'

Alfred makes a curious departure from the Latin at a point where a literal translation would have been adequate, and his departure from the text introduces an unexpected difficulty. Dr. Miller's translation increases the difficulty. The Latin text has *clerici extra sacros ordines constituti*, clergy outside holy orders. That is, persons in orders but not in holy orders, below the rank of subdeacon, in "minor orders." Alfred's addition of *priests* appears to disregard this fundamental distinction; but Dr. Plummer points out that we have other examples of persons in minor orders being called priests.

This is not an occasion for a discussion of the quadripartite division of the whole income of a diocese and the tripartite division, the simplest case of the tripartite division being where the bishop undertook the expense of repairing the fabrics of the churches, which was a fourth part of the earlier arrangement. Alfred adds an important phrase to Augustine's question as to the gifts of the faithful at the altar—and at God's church. On the face of it this looks like our modern distinction between an offertory and a collection. In 610, a dozen years after Augustine's inquiry, the second Council of Braga, ordering a tripartite division, forbade the bishop taking a third of the offerings in parish churches; Alfred's phrase may be some echo of that.

Alfred's Last Will and Testament throws some light on the 'poor servants of God' and on the 'gifts to the Church.' He gives this instruction to the persons who should carry out the provisions of his Will: 'Let them distribute, for me and for my father, and for the friends that he interceded for and that I intercede for, 200 pounds; 50 to the mass-priests all over my kingdom, 50 to the poor servants of God, 50 to the distressed poor, 50 to the church where I shall rest.' None of this, it would appear, specially not the last fifty, was to be counted as diocesan income, subject to partition.

In some respects the most important of Augustine's questions and Gregory's answers is the second. It is technically a question, but literally only a statement.

'Whereas there is one faith, there are diverse customs among the churches; there is one custom for the celebration of masses in the holy Roman church and another is maintained in the realm of Gaul.'

The answer is most remarkable, and it loses nothing of its point and force in Alfred's rendering.

'You know yourself the mode of worship and customs of the Roman church¹ in which you were brought up. But it now seems to me, and I prefer, that whatever it be that you find in the Roman church,¹ or the church of Gaul, or in any other, which may be more pleasing to Almighty God,² you carefully choose this,³ and establish it to be firmly maintained in the English church which is still new in the faith. For things are not to be loved for the sake of the places, but places for the good things. Therefore, whatever you select as pious, good, and right, from among all the various churches, put together and establish in the minds of the English as a custom.'

There is an interesting example of this breadth of view respecting local churches in a tractate by Boethius, seventy years before Gregory, on *The Catholic Faith*.⁴ "The Catholic Church, then, spread throughout the world, is known by three particular marks: whatever is believed and taught in it has the authority of the Scriptures, or of universal tradition, or at least of its own and proper usage. And this authority is binding on the whole Church, as is also the universal tradition of the Fathers; while each separate church exists and is governed by its private constitution and its proper rites according to differences of locality and the good judgment of each."

After this, questions and answers come which deal with degrees of affinity in holy matrimony.

Then follows a question very pertinent to the problems

¹ Alfred carefully follows Augustine's phrase "the holy Roman church" and also Gregory's phrase "the Roman church."

² *Quod plus omnipotenti Deo possit placere.*

³ Collected, Gregory inserts, from many churches, *de multis ecclesiis.*

⁴ *De Fide Catholica*, Loeb Classical Library, Boethius, p. 71, H. F. Stewart and E. K. Rand. Heinemann, 1918.

of an infant church far away from a centre of spiritual life. Augustine asks Gregory,

‘ If the distance between places is great, so that bishops may not easily travel, may a bishop be consecrated without the presence of other bishops ? ’

Gregory replies :

‘ Truly in the Englishchurch, in which you, so far, are the only bishop to be found, you cannot consecrate a bishop otherwise [than] without other bishops. Bishops shall come to you from the kingdom of Gallia to stand as witnesses at a bishop’s consecration. For the consecration of bishops may not take place in any other way save before a congregation¹ and in presence of three or of four bishops, that they may make prayer and send up their petitions together for his protection to Almighty God.’ This is very much longer in *Bede*.

Turning now to the Latin original, we shall see that Alfred does not agree with Gregory, either on the main point or on the reference to the Gallia or the Gauls.² His first sentence is incomplete, the insertion of *than* appearing to be necessary, but none of the manuscripts justify its insertion. In the second sentence he alters Gregory’s answer, and puts it into a form which directly contradicts Gregory’s very curious reference to the Gallic bishops. Further, he omits an interesting simile which Gregory introduces in favour of the publicity of episcopal consecrations.

“ In the Church of the English,” Gregory wrote, “ of which you are as yet the only bishop, you cannot otherwise ordain a bishop than in the absence of other bishops. For when do bishops come over from Gaul, that they may be present as witnesses to you in ordaining a bishop ? ”

This evidently means that Augustine must ordain his first bishops alone, without other bishops. But, as we have said, this question, “ For when do bishops come from Gaul ? ” is at best a curious one. Alfred is not the only commentator who has seen this so clearly that he has altered it. The Benedictine editors read “ unless other ” in place of “ for when,” *nisi aliqui* in place of *nam quando*, “ unless other bishops come from Gaul,” and Dr. Giles so read the passage,

¹ See next page.

² The MSS. have both *Galliis* and *Gallis*.

and translated it accordingly. On the whole, the coming and going among the Gallic bishops, to which Gregory refers in his next answer, renders it probable, to say the least, that his advice to Augustine was that he should find his opportunity "when bishops come from Gaul," and ordain his first bishops in their presence.

Gregory continued with a passage which so much needs amendment that Alfred showed discretion in omitting it :

"But we would have you, my brother, so to ordain bishops that they be not far apart . . . and that at the ordination of a bishop other pastors (*pastores*) also, whose presence is of great benefit, should easily come together."

After that the Latin text rejoins Alfred ; and it must be allowed that it conflicts with Alfred's view that bishops must come from Gaul to assist at consecrations until the English bishops are sufficiently numerous to form a *quorum*.

"Thus when, by the help of God, bishops shall have been ordained in places near to one another, no ordination of a bishop is to take place without assembling three, or four, bishops."

Then follows the simile which Alfred cleverly sums up in his words 'before a congregation.'

"In spiritual affairs we may take example from the temporal, that they may be wisely and discreetly conducted. For when marriages are celebrated in the world, some married persons are assembled, that those who went before in the way of matrimony may partake of the joy of the new union. Why then, in this spiritual ordinance by which man is joined to God, should there not come together such as can rejoice in the advancement of the bishop ordained, or pour forth their prayers together to Almighty God for his protection ? "

One other very pointed question we must take before passing on to a wider field. One of the points raised had vastly greater importance than either Augustine or Gregory at that stage could imagine.

"How shall we proceed with the bishops of Gaul and Britain ? " Alfred answers :

'We do not grant you any authority in the case of the bishops in Gaul, for ever since the old days of my predecessor,

the bishop in the city of Arles has received the pallium, whom we should not deprive or bereave of the authority he has obtained. But if you chance to travel in Gaul, confer and consult with this bishop as to the course of action, and if there be any fault found in bishops, how they should be corrected and reformed. And if it be said that he is too remiss in vigour and severity of discipline, then he must be incited and reformed with your brotherly love,¹ so that he may remove from the conduct of bishops those habits which are contrary to the law and ordinance of our Creator. But you may not judge the bishops of Gaul without their own authority,² but you shall ever admonish them gently and show them the example of your own good works. We commit to your brotherliness all British bishops, that the unlearned be learned, the weak strengthened, the unright set right by your authority.'

The remaining questions and answers related to matters more suited to the confessional than to open discussion.

¹ Here Gregory informs Augustine that he has written to the Gallican prelate bidding him consult with Augustine for the purpose next mentioned. Alfred's omission of this is an evidence of his care as an editor. He omits both of the letters to Arles which form chapters 24 and 28 in Bede's First Book; and with this in his mind, he was careful to strike out Gregory's mention of the second letter.

² *extra auctoritatem propriam* (Alfred, *aldorlicnesse*); more probably "outside your own jurisdiction."

CHAPTER IV

Alfred's omission of Gregory's arrangement of a southern and a northern province—And of the treatment of the idol temples of the pagan English—Apparent change of mind of Gregory on this point—Alfred's omission of Bede's account of Gregory's writings—And of the obstinate attitude of the Irish bishops—And of local and personal touches—And of King Edwin's personal pomp.

ALFRED makes very large omissions from Bede's text at the end of Book I and the beginning of Book II. He omits chapters 29–32 inclusive of Book I, giving only one short sentence by way of summary of Gregory's very important letter in chapter 29 on the diocesan arrangements which were to be aimed at for England. Speaking of Gregory's care for England in this respect, Alfred only says, 'He sent also to bishop Augustine a pallium, and a letter in which he signified how he should consecrate other bishops,¹ and in what places in Britain he should establish them.' It may possibly have been that the King did not wish to make known to the unlearned how far short of Gregory's forecast the development of bishoprics had been. On the other hand, we find signs of a feeling on his part that matters of what we should naturally call antiquarian interest were not needful for his purpose of giving practical information and instruction to his people. To us, the letter omitted has very great interest, and if Gregory's forecast has not been as yet realized in the northern province, it has been much more than realized in the south. This is what Gregory wrote to Augustine and Alfred did not include in his version :

"Since the new church of the English (*nova Anglorum ecclesia*) is through the goodness of the Lord and by your labours brought to the grace of God, we grant you the use of the pallium in the same, only for the celebration of masses ; so that you in several places ordain twelve bishops, who shall be subject to your jurisdiction. For the future the bishop of London shall be ordained by his own synod, and shall

¹ This has nothing to do with the question and answer dealt with on p. 201.

receive the honour of the pallium from this holy and apostolic see.¹ We will that you send to York city a bishop such as you think fit to ordain, but only that he too, if that city and the neighbouring places receive the word of God, may ordain twelve bishops and enjoy the honour of a metropolitan, for we design to bestow upon him also the pallium. We will that he be under your authority, and in no way subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop of London.² In the future there shall be this arrangement between the bishops of London and York, that he who was first ordained shall have precedence (*prior habeatur*). In common council and in concordant action, they shall act in unanimity in the work for Christ."

Canterbury, it has been said, has largely exceeded the appointed number of twelve suffragans. Continuing to count the four Welsh bishops, Canterbury has now (1920) twenty-nine suffragans; York has eleven, and is likely to have more. The struggles for precedence between York and Canterbury were serious in the early Norman times, and even went so far as personal violence on the part of Canterbury, on whose knee York had seated himself so as not to yield precedence of place. The question was then settled, for ever we must suppose. York is Primate of England, Canterbury is Primate of All England.

Another letter of Gregory's which Bede gives in full and Alfred omits had a special interest for an early Anglo-Saxon king. It dealt with a question on which it has been said that Gregory had changed his view, probably on information received from England; no less a question than how the new converts were to treat the temples of the gods of the pagan Anglo-Saxons. In his most interesting letter to King Ethelbert, on hearing of his conversion, he wrote (*H.E.* i. 32), "suppress the worship of idols, destroy the structures of the temples." But it would appear that some of these temples were important fabrics. In the case of two of the temples in Canterbury itself, they had been consecrated Christian churches in the time of Romano-British Christianity. Gregory wrote another letter on the subject, also omitted by the king. We must again suppose that Alfred

¹ By order of a later pope, the metropolitan see was fixed at Canterbury, not transferred to London.

² The Northern Metropolitan was not to be subject to the Southern Metropolitan.

regarded the question as having long ceased to be a practical one, though the desecration of churches by the Danish invaders must have raised very practical bearings in Alfred's England.

The letter was written in the early years of the mission. It is dated June 17, 601. It was sent by the hands of Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and the other members of the supplementary party sent from Rome when the report of Augustine's initial successes reached Gregory. The letter was addressed to Mellitus. It charged him to tell Augustine, as soon as he should reach England, that Gregory had determined that the temples of idols should by no means all be destroyed. "Let the idols," he wrote, "be destroyed, the temples be sprinkled with holy water, altars erected, relics placed in them. For if the temples are well built, they must be converted from the worship of idols to the service of the true God. The English people, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may lay aside error from their hearts, and knowing and adoring the true God, may the more naturally come to the places to which they have been accustomed to resort for worship."

This letter, as we have seen, was dated 17 June in the 19th year of the Emperor Maurice. The letter to Ethelbert was dated 22 June in the same 19th year. If the date of day makes it certain that the letter to Mellitus was written and done with five days before the letter to Ethelbert was written, we can only suppose that to Ethelbert the general rule was given, to destroy; the exception, to save substantial fabrics, was put entirely into Augustine's hands.

Gregory then touches on another point, and here his instructions kept alive many pagan practices, not all of which had died out a generation or two ago, while some have become markedly Christian. "Because," he wrote to Mellitus, "they have been accustomed to slaughter many oxen in sacrifices to devils, some solemnity must be arranged for them for suitable occasions, such as the dedication day of the church, or the nativity days of the holy martyrs whose relics lie there. On such occasions they may build themselves huts of the boughs of trees about the churches which once were temples, and celebrate the solemnity with religious feasting, no longer offering animals to devils, but killing them to the praise of God for their eating, returning thanks for their sustenance to the giver of all things. If some

outward rejoicings are continued to them, they may the more easily be able to accept inward joys. Beyond doubt it is impossible to cut out from obdurate minds everything at once.¹ He who would ascend to the highest place is raised by steps or degrees, not by leaps and bounds."

In some respects more curious are Alfred's omissions at the beginning of the Second Book of *Bede's History*. He takes the first line or two, which tell that Gregory died in the year 605, and then immediately passes on to his epitaph, omitting Bede's account of his life and writings. Among the writings of Gregory Bede specially mentions the *Pastoral Care* and the *Dialogues*. It has been suggested that Alfred translated the Bede after he had produced or procured the translations of the *Pastoral Care* and the *Dialogues*, and that he felt it to be unnecessary to tell his people what he had already told them in a very complete manner by putting the books themselves within their reach. Even so, the words of Bede are few and clear, and might well have been retained in the Anglo-Saxon version of the *Ecclesiastical History*; and, it may be added, to argue that the *Pastoral Care* and the *Dialogues* were within the reach of the English people is to use an expression which in no sort of way fits in with the literary conditions of the time. It may be as well to give Bede's words in this connexion, in a modern English dress, from Book ii, chap. i :

"He likewise composed another remarkable book, which is called *Pastoral*. In it, he showed very clearly what manner of men should be appointed to the rule of the church; how the appointed rulers should themselves live; with what discretion they must instruct the several classes of persons whom they taught; and with what intentness they should ponder each day their own frailty." That is no unfaithful or inadequate summary, however concise, of *Pastoralis*.

Further, "he composed four books of *Dialogues*, in which, at the request of his deacon Peter, he collected, as examples for those who should come after of how to live, the mighty works of holy men whom he had known or of whom he had heard as renowned in Italy; to the end that, as in his *Expositions* he taught for what virtues men should labour, so

¹ We may remember how later generations had to stamp out the heathen practice of ceremonial feasting on horse-flesh.

here he should show the splendour of such virtues." Again no unfaithful or inadequate summary.

Of Laurentius, who succeeded Augustine in the Archbishopric, Bede writes (ii. 4) that he not only took charge of the new church of the English, but endeavoured to take pastoral care of the tribes of the ancient inhabitants of Britain, as also of the Scots who inhabit the island of Ireland¹ which is next to Britain. He wrote a hortatory epistle to the Scots, addressed "To our most dear brethren the lords bishops and abbats throughout all the country of the Scots, Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus, bishops, servants of the servants of God." He gives the main part of the very frank letter :

"When the Apostolic see, according to the universal custom which it has followed elsewhere, sent us to these western parts to preach to pagan nations, and it was our lot to come into this island which is called Britain, we held both Britons and Scots in great esteem for sanctity, before we knew them, believing that they walked according to the custom of the universal Church. When we became acquainted with the Britons, we supposed that the Scots were better. But now we have learned from Bishop Dagan² who came in to this island, and from Abbat Columban in Gaul, that the Scots in no way differ from the Britons in their course. When Bishop Dagan came to us, not only did he refuse to eat at the same table with us, he would not even eat in the same house with us."

Bede adds that they wrote also to the bishops of the Britons, "but what they gained by so doing the present times still show." That remark, so late as the year 730, is of some importance. It will be interesting to note how Alfred deals with a point so pertinent to his own experiences of the British Church of his time, a hundred and sixty years later.

He compresses the story into two or three lines, but this one point he gives in full. The whole of what he gives as representing the above extracts is this :

'He not only cared for the new church which was gathered out of the English race, but also for the old inhabitants, the Britons and the Scots. He wrote and sent a letter to them, praying and entreating them that they would agree with

¹ Scotia.

² An Irish bishop from Wicklow.

the church of Christ which is spread throughout the world. And though he did so, the present times and the same usages ¹ prove how little he succeeded.'

A long list might be made of interesting little local and personal touches in Bede which Alfred omits. One or two examples will suffice.

Bede is describing in the fourteenth chapter of his Second Book the work of Paulinus and Edwin in Bernicia and in Deira. He gives first a record of Paulinus's thirty-six days of full occupation in Glendale, from morning till night, at the royal residence called then At Gefrin,² preaching, catechizing, baptizing in the river Glen. Then he brings the bishop and the king to the southern province of Northumbria, Deira, where he followed a like course, using the river Swale as his baptistery, as it flowed by the royal residence at Cataractum, Catterick, because as yet oratories and baptisteries were not built in those parts. In Campodonum, where was then a royal township, he built a church which the pagans by whom King Edwin was slain afterwards burned together with all the place. Instead of this royal seat the later kings built themselves a township in the country called Loidis (Leeds). But the altar, being of stone, escaped the fire and is still preserved in the monastery of the most reverend abbat and priest Thrydwulf, which is in the forest of Elmet.

Alfred renders the Deiran part of this passage as follows :

'In the province of Deira, where the bishop was often with the king, he baptized people in the river Swalwa, which lies by the town Cetreht. For as yet, at the beginning of the new-born church, neither churches nor baptisteries had been erected. But in Donafeld,³ where was a royal residence, Edwin ordered a church to be built, which after a time, along with all the royal buildings, was burned by the heathen who afterwards slew the king. And instead of it, his successors built a residence in the district called Loidis.' The interesting record of the stone altar the king omits. No doubt the surface slab is meant by the "altar."

Two chapters further on (ii. 16), we find another omission

¹ There appears to be some uncertainty about the force of this. Four of the MSS. have it.

² The Anglo-Saxon pronunciation of *g* and *y* gives the name as Yevrin, the modern Yevinger or Yeavinger.

³ A literal rendering of Campodonum or Campodunum. We naturally connect it with the river Don and Don-caster.

of the concluding words of a chapter. Bede is describing the extraordinary prosperity of Edwin in the time of perfect peace under his rule. We might have supposed that King Alfred would not allow a word of this to escape him. As a matter of fact, he does very carefully give us the force of each word until he comes to the last sentence, where the personal pomp of Edwin is described, and every word of that he omits.

He shall tell us in his own words what Bede's Latin told to him. It is a very good rendering of Bede's appreciative description.

‘It is said that in those times there was such peace in Britain, everywhere around, where Edwin had authority, though a woman should go alone with her new-born child, she might proceed without injury from sea to sea all over this island. Also the king established for the use of his people a custom, that in many places where clear springs ran, and on frequented roads where there was most traffic, he directed for the refreshment of travellers that poles should be set up and brazen cups hung upon them : and yet no one, out of fear and love for him, dared or would touch them except for his necessary use.

‘He maintained such a noble style in his realm that not only were standards borne before him in battle, but also in time of peace, wherever he rode among his hamlets or townships with his thegns, and even if he was on foot, the ensign¹ was always borne before him.’

Bede gives the last words in the following form, which we might have supposed would commend itself to the king :

“Also, when he walked anywhere along the streets, that sort of banner which the Romas call Tufa, and the English Thuuf, was in like manner borne before him.”

¹ Token.

CHAPTER V

Alfred's suppression of the Scotie controversy—His full praise of the work of the Scotie clergy—Omission of the account of a Columbite monastery, and of Ecgbert's life in Ireland—Alfred's account of Aidan and of Fursey's vision—Alfred's omission of the Easter controversy—And of Bede's panegyric on the Scotie clergy—And of Adamnan's visit to Aldfrith.

KING ALFRED'S treatment of the great part which the Scotie Church played in the Christian history of Northumbria deserves a chapter to itself.

It has been suggested that he suppressed Bede's record of the Scotie controversy which came to a head in King Oswy's time, because he desired to avoid recognition of the debt the English owed to the Scotie monks. There is no real ground for that suggestion, as a wider examination shows. It seems clear that he only omitted that very striking episode, so graphically put before us by Bede and Stephen Eddi, because it was an acute early controversy, with a rightful ending, and had left no echo in Alfred's time. As we shall see, he gives at full length the unstinted praise of the early Scotie missionaries which the broad-minded Catholic Churchman Bede evidently found real pleasure in setting forth on the pages of his *History*.

Bede begins his Third Book, which contains the whole story, with the battle of Heathfield, where Edwin, the first Christian King of Northumbria, was defeated and slain by an army composed of pagan Mercian Angles and Christian Britons of the west. The two princes who succeeded respectively to the two provinces of Northumbria apostatized to paganism, but were slain impartially by the same combination of enemies. This left Oswald the next in succession to both provinces. He had been in exile during Edwin's reign, and had lived among the Irish¹ monks at Iona, by whom he

¹ It has to be remembered throughout that the Scots were the inhabitants of Hibernia, the early histories having no such word as Irish. The Scots who left Ireland and settled in Caledonia eventually became the leading race in Caledonia, which was called Scotland from them. The Irish monks of Iona were pure Hibernians. "Scottish," or "Scotic," means what we now should call Irish.

was converted and baptized. He collected an army, attacked the invaders of his native province, and completely defeated them at the Battle of Heavenfield.

Before we pass on to a consideration of the restoration of Christianity by Oswald, king and martyr, we may note the fact that King Alfred omitted a considerable passage in the second chapter of the book, in connexion with Oswald's victory over the invaders of Northumbria; probably because the ravages of the Danes had put an end to the pretty practice described by Bede. Speaking of the victory Bede says (*H. E.* iii. 2):

"The place of the battle is near the wall in the north which the Romans formerly drew across the whole of Britain from sea to sea, to restrain the onslaught of the barbarous nations, as has been said before. Hither also the brothers of the church of Hagustald,¹ which is not far distant, long ago made it their custom to resort every year, on the day before that on which King Oswald was slain, to keep vigil there for the health of his soul, and having sung many psalms of praise, to offer for him in the morning the sacrifice of the Holy Oblation. And since that good custom has spread, they have lately built a church there, which has attached to that place additional sanctity and honour in the eyes of all men: and this with good reason, for it appears that there was no symbol of the Christian faith, no church, no altar, erected throughout all the nation of the Bernicians, before that new leader of war, prompted by the zeal of his faith, set up this standard of the Cross as he was going to give battle to his barbarous enemy."

Hagustald, Hexham, is some seven or eight miles from the probable site of the battle. The noble church which Wilfrith built at Hexham and dedicated to St. Andrew; his residence at Hexham as his bishop-stool, the actual stone stool being there still; Acca's abode there as bishop, Bede's special correspondent and friend; and the noble cross still in existence which stood at one end of Acca's grave; all this has given to Hexham a high place in the early history of Christianity among the English.

The accuracy of Bede's statement about the absence of cross and altar "among the Bernicians" should be noted. Edwin ruled over the whole of Northumbria, but he was

¹ Hexham.

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himself the head of the royal family of Deira, and his chief Christian work was done in that province, where he principally resided. We have "the crosses of Paulinus" mentioned in a post-Conquest charter as boundary stones near Easingwold, and other like memorials of that earliest date are recorded in the southern province. Edwin and Paulinus did visit the north, but their permanent works were in the south.

When Oswald had established himself in his kingdom, he set himself to the task of restoring Christianity. Paulinus and his Italians had fled with Edwin's widow and family to Kent, and showed no signs of returning to their missionary work. Oswald naturally looked to his Christian teachers in Iona for help in the work to which he had set himself. They sent to him Aidan as his bishop, by whom a very remarkable work was done. Bede introduces him thus (*H. E.* iii. 3):

"They sent to him, as bishop, Aidan, a man of singular meekness, piety, and moderation, zealous in the cause of God, though not completely according to knowledge. For he was wont to keep the Sunday of Easter after the custom of his race, of which we have frequently made mention, from the fourteenth of the moon to the twentieth. The northern portion of the Scots [Irish] and the whole nation of the Picts were at that time still keeping Easter Sunday on that rule, holding that they were following the writings of Anatolius, the holy father worthy of all praise; whether they were right or not, any one skilled in the matter can very easily determine. The Scots in the southern part of the island of Hibernia had long ago learned the canonical rule of Easter, on the instruction of the apostolic see. When the bishop came to the king, he appointed him his episcopal see in the island of Lindisfarne."

The whole of this is represented by a line or two in Alfred's Book iii. 2: 'They sent him a bishop named Aidan, a man of much gentleness, piety, and moderation; and he had the zeal of God and love for him in a high degree. Now when the bishop came to the king, he assigned him a place and an episcopal residence in Lindisfarne, in accordance with his own prayer and desire.' The king omits the interesting local touch which Bede gives: "which place, as the tide ebbs and flows, is twice a day enclosed by the waves of the sea

like an island ; and twice, when the beach is left dry, becomes contiguous with the land.”¹

From that point Alfred follows Bede in a panegyric of the work of the Scotie clergy in Northumbria. It is a singularly taking account.

‘The king humbly and cheerfully followed the admonitions of Aidan in all points, and zealously builded and reared Christ’s church in his kingdom. And oft there was the fair spectacle, when the bishop was teaching the word of God, that as he was not fully learned in the English tongue, the king himself, being fully learned in the Scots’ tongue, acted as interpreter of the heavenly doctrine to his aldermen and thegns. At that time many came daily from the land of the Scots into Britain, and with great fervour preached and taught the faith of Christ to the tribes of the English over whom Oswald was king. And those who were of the priesthood² baptized them. Churches were built in many places, and the folk of Angle-kin flocked to hear the word of God which they preached and taught. And the king gave and bestowed upon them possessions and land for the erection of a monastery,³ and Scots instructed young⁴ and old with monastic discipline. For those who had come to teach were monks, as was Bishop Aidan himself. He was sent from the island and monastery which was called Iona, which was for a long time the chief seat and ruling authority among all the North Scots and the monasteries of the Picts.⁵ The Picts assigned and made over this place to the monks of the Scots, because they had received the faith of Christ through their teaching.’

Here Bede interposes a long chapter—which Alfred entirely omits—on the mission of Columba to the northern Picts, “who are separated from the southern parts of that

¹ When the Bishops of the Anglican Communion visited Lindisfarne at the time of the Lambeth Conference of 1908, the day chosen for the visit was naturally the day on which “low water” was in the middle of the day, so that the visitors could get to Lindisfarne and back in the dry. By some curious miscalculation, it was high water, not low water, in the middle of the day chosen, and the body of a thousand pilgrims, men and women, had to cross in carts and carriages of all kinds, about two hundred having to “plodge,” the local term for wading across up to the waist.

² Not “mass-priesthood” as usual, probably because the other Sacrament was here in question.

³ Bede says monasteries.

⁴ Bede says Scots instructed English children.

⁵ Bede says that island belongs to Britain, being divided from it by a small arm of the sea.

nation by steep and rugged mountains ; the southern Picts, who dwell on this side of those mountains, having long before forsaken the errors of idolatry and received the true faith by the preaching of Bishop Ninias." Ninian's episcopal see was famous for a church dedicated to St. Martin, "wherein Ninian and many other saints rest in the body." "The place is now in the possession of the English nation, belonging to the province of the Bernicians, commonly called the White House because he there built a church of stone, which was not usual among the Britons."

It is in this chapter that we have Bede's interesting statement of the constitution of a Columbite monastery. "The island—Hii¹—has for its ruler an abbat, who is a priest, to whose jurisdiction all the province, and even the bishops, contrary to the usual method, are bound to be subject, according to the example of their first teacher, who was not a bishop but a priest and monk."

Bede completes his chapter with an episode in the life of the Englishman Ecgbert, "who had long lived in banishment in Ireland, and corrected the error of the Scots, and taught them the true and canonical date of Easter." Of him there is much more to be said, some of which will be found at pages 243–246.

There is no question that as a matter of editing this chapter is out of place here. It must have been inserted after Bede's chapters 3 and 5 were written, for when it is omitted the narrative at the end of chapter 3 flows smoothly on to the beginning of chapter 5. But that was certainly not Alfred's reason for omitting it. The affairs of the Picts and the Irish were far removed from the interests of the Angles and Saxons of Alfred's time, and that was reason enough. On the other hand, Alfred was evidently deeply impressed by the beauty of the combined work of Oswald and Aidan, and he enters with zest upon Bede's fifth chapter, which he makes the third chapter of his Third Book. He takes all the points. Aidan never went about the country on horseback, except for special need ; he went on foot, in order that he might speak to every one whom he met ; if they were unbelievers he invited them to receive the mysteries of the faith of Christ, if they were believers he strengthened

¹ The true name of Iona has no consonant in it. It has various forms, Hy, Hii, and the vowels without the initial H. The Latin of "the island Hii" was *Ioua insula*, "the Io-an island." An early miscopying of *Ioua* gave rise to the false name *Iona*.

them in their faith and urged them to almsgiving and the performance of good deeds. His life so differed from the sluggishness "of our time," as both Bede and Alfred say, that all who were with him, tonsured or layman, must learn psalms, or other holy writings, or devote themselves to holy prayer; that was to him and all with him the daily work. By his example, many religious men and women—'all religious people,' Alfred says—were so encouraged that it became their habit to fast up to the ninth hour—3 p.m.—every Wednesday and Friday throughout the year except during fifty days after Easter. Then both Bede and Alfred tell the interesting little tale of how the Scots of Iona had first sent to Oswald another of their number to be bishop, who did not succeed and returned to Iona to tell them how he had failed. A modest voice—Aidan's—solved the difficulty. 'I think, brother, you were in your teaching harder with those unlearned men than was right, and you did not, in accordance with the apostolical discipline, give them first to drink the milk of gentle doctrine, till they, being fed gradually with the word of God, might receive the perfect and glorious ordinances of God.' 'Now when the council heard these words, they turned their eyes and faces all to him, and earnestly considered what he said. Thereupon it was decided by the judgment of all that Aidan was worthy of the episcopate and should be sent as a teacher to the English, as he by God's grace had shown such discretion in their debate.'

A large part of Bede's Third Book is occupied by accounts of the miracles wrought by the merits of Oswald, and here for the most part Alfred carefully follows Bede. When Bede passes on to tell of Fursey, a man of the highest race among the Scots, and his doings at Burghcastle and elsewhere, Alfred again shows his interest in Scottish work and his appreciation of it. 'Noble as Furseus was by birth, he was far nobler in mind than in worldly origin, and from the time of his childhood he had great zeal for sacred study and also for monastic discipline; and, what is most becoming in holy men, all he learned to do he carefully strove to maintain.' Alfred gives at full length the remarkable vision of Fursey, with its four fires and the bodies and souls that burned there, and its three angels who guided him safely amid the fires and opened a way for him through the flames. The climax Alfred relates with great force as follows :

‘When they again drew near to the great fire, the angel again divided the flame before him. And when the man of God came to the door that was opened for him through the flame, the unclean spirits caught one of the men that were being tortured in the flame, and threw him all burning on Furseus ; and he hit his shoulders and cheek and scorched him. Then he recognized the man, and recollected that he had received his garment when he died. Then at once the angel took the man and threw him back into the fire. But the accursed foe said : Seek not to reject him whom you received before ; for as you formerly received his sinful goods, so you must share his torments. Then the angel replied to him : Nay, quoth he, he did not receive his goods out of covetousness, but because he would save his soul. And the fire ceased from him. Then the angel turned to him and said : What you kindled burns in you ; for if you had not received the property of this man, who died in his sins, his punishment would not burn in you. Then after a little while he was restored to the body ; and for all his lifetime the mark of the burning which he suffered in his soul he bore so that all could see, in his shoulder and on his cheek ; and in wondrous fashion, what the soul suffered in secret, that the body showed openly.’ It all sounds very Irish, as it naturally should sound.

‘There is now still living an old brother belonging to our monastery, who told me—quoth the author of this account¹—that he was informed by a very pious and excellent man of having seen Furseus and heard his visions from his own mouth. He added that it was winter time, and the winter’s cold was severe, and all was hard with frost and ice. Further, the holy man sat in a thin garment, and while speaking, owing to the extreme terror recalled by his vision, he sweated excessively, as if in the sultriness of midsummer.’

Later on in the Third Book of his *History*, Bede has two chapters, 25 and 26, with the headings : “How the controversy arose about the due time of keeping Easter with those that came out of Scotland” [Ireland], and “Colman being worsted returned home ; Tuda succeeded him in the bishopric ; the state of the church under those teachers.” These chapters occupy eleven octavo pages in the Latin,

¹ This is inserted by Alfred to explain who the “me” was. Bede says ‘told him,’ not “told me.”

and are of the very highest interest ; they are entirely omitted by Alfred's translator, and their headings are omitted from his initial summary.

Aidan naturally brought with him to Lindisfarne the practices of Iona, and they differed in some respects from the practices of the missionaries from Italy. As time went on, and intercourse with the south of England was renewed, the Northumbrians were brought face to face with the diversity of practice, especially as regarded the date for keeping the pivot festival of the Christian year, the anniversary of the Resurrection of the Lord. The question, brought to its simplest form, was this : Which of the two full moons in the spring-time of the year is the full moon that regulated the Hebrew Festival to which the Christian Easter corresponded ? It was easy to fix dates between which the ruling full moon must appear, if only you could persuade all races of Christians to agree to the same dates. For example, it was easy to say that the full moon must be that which happens on or next after March 21, the vernal equinox. If one Christian race allowed a full moon happening on March 19 or 20 to be the Easter full moon, while others had to wait a month for the next full moon, that next after the 21st, the two races would be keeping Easter at times some four weeks apart. In many years there would be no difference, as, for instance, if a full moon happened on any day from March 21 to April 16. It was only when there was a full moon very near the critical day of the month that there was danger of the Festival being kept by two races on days a month apart. Besides this difficulty, there was another which might cause the Festival to be kept on days a week apart, even when two races were agreed that March 21 was the true day. So far we have not taken into consideration the fact that they were arranging not merely for the Easter Festival, but for Easter Sunday. In the earliest times there were those who kept the Easter Festival on the fourteenth day from the Easter Moon, whatever the day of the week. From this they were called Fourteenth-men, in Latin Quartodecimans. That practice soon disappeared, and Sunday became the fixed day. Suppose that the pivot day, March 21, was itself a Sunday. Was that to be Easter Day ? The full moon might be due at any time of that day ; that is, there were parts of the day *before* the full moon. Some held that it was necessary to wait to the

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Sunday after for Easter Day; others said it was not. It was this last difference of opinion that brought the matter to a head in Northumbria and led to the great debate, and the drastic results, which Alfred completely excluded from the version of the *Ecclesiastical History of the English Race* provided for the reading of his own English men.

Bede tells us, in a very interesting way, how by degrees the question came to the front in Northumbria by means of the arguments of those who were in communication with the south of England, and with Gaul and Italy. King Oswy, who had succeeded Oswald, observed the rule for Easter which Aidan and Finan and Colman had practised, the three bishops whom Iona had sent to rule successively the ecclesiastical affairs of the northern province. His wife Eanfleda was a Kentish princess, and she and her ladies and her Kentish attendants naturally preferred the general or catholic rule they had been taught to regard as the correct rule.

At last the extreme case, which rarely happened, brought a full moon on Sunday, March 21. King Oswy kept on that day his Easter Feast, and when he called for the presence of the queen and her court to grace the festivities, he found that they were keeping Palm Sunday, and were proposing to keep Easter on the Sunday following. This naturally brought things to a head.

Before describing the great debate which took place on the subject, Bede introduces yet another complication, which had to be carefully handled by him, touching a marked and attractive personality on the close of whose career Bede draws an impenetrable veil. This was Alchfrith, the son of King Oswy, and his partner in the government as sub-king of the southern part of Northumbria, called then Deira, with its capital at York.

Oswy, Bede reminds us, had been taught and baptized by the Scots (Irish), when in exile among them, and being very perfectly skilled in their language, thought nothing better than that which they taught. But his son Alchfrith had been instructed in Christianity by Wilfrith, a most learned man, who had gone to Rome for ecclesiastical doctrine and had received the correct ecclesiastical tonsure. Before Alchfrith had come under the masterful influence of Wilfrith, he had given to the Scots a large district of forty families at Ripon, for a monastery. Under Wilfrith's influence he now

offered them their choice between accepting the catholic usages or quitting their settlement at Ripon. They chose the second alternative, and he gave Ripon to Wilfrith.

The struggle between the Scottish and the catholic usages had more or less slumbered so long as Aidan and Finan lived, but when Colman succeeded to the bishopric of Northumbria it blazed out. Oswy determined to have a public discussion and arrive at a definite decision one way or the other.

The discussion took place at Whitby, the monastic seat of a semi-royal lady, the Abbess Hild. Oswy presided. Colman and his party argued the Columbite claim, the young abbat Wilfrith argued the catholic case. In the end, Oswy asked the Columbites if it was true that St. Peter held the keys of heaven?—Yes, it was true.—Did they claim that the blessed Columba also holds the keys of heaven?—No, they did not.—“Then,” the king remarked, with a slight smile (Eddi, *subridens*), “I too say that St. Peter is the doorkeeper. Him I will not contradict. His decrees I desire to obey so far as I know and am able; lest, when I come to the doors of the kingdom of the heavens, there be none to open, he who holds the keys being against me.” Of all of this Alfred gives not one word.

That concludes Bede's twenty-fifth chapter. In his twenty-sixth chapter he gives us a charming account of the life the Scots had lived at Lindisfarne and on their visits to the mainland, and the love the people had for them. They had on the Holy Isle barely roofs enough to cover them. They had no money; only cattle. If they received money from wealthy persons, they gave it to the poor. They had no need to gather money or provide houses for the reception of great men, for such never came to the church except to pray and to hear the word of God. The king himself, when he felt an urgent call, would come with only five attendants, or six, and when he had finished prayer he went away; if by chance it happened that they must take food, they were content with the simple daily food of the brethren and asked for nothing more. The only care of those teachers was to serve God, not the world; to feed the heart, not the belly.

The religious habit was held in great veneration under those conditions. Wheresoever a cleric or a monk came, he was joyfully received by all as God's servant; if he was met on the road, they would run to him, bend the knee before him, be signed with the cross by his hand or blessed by his

voice, carefully listen to his exhortations. On the Lord's Days they flocked to the church or the monasteries, not for the refreshment of the body but for hearing the word of God. If one of the priests arrived at a village, the villagers flocked together to hear from him the word of life; for priests and clerics went to the villages for no other purpose than to baptize, to visit the sick, and to engage in the cure of souls. They were so completely cleansed from the pest of avarice, that except under compulsion from the temporal authorities they refused to accept lands and possessions for the construction of monasteries; and that principle remained in force in the Northumbrian churches for some time after they had left.

That is a very pretty account, and very high praise. It is all the more valuable and attractive as coming from a stiff High-Churchman like our Venerable Bede. Alfred's translator omitted every word of it.

The omission cannot be due to dislike of the Scottish work for Christ. We have quoted Alfred's full recognition of its character and value. The twenty-sixth chapter was just the kind of story which would attract the direct simplicity of Alfred's religious character. We may feel sure that its omission was consequential upon the omission of Chapter 25, without which, or some such preface, it would have no connexion with the regular flow of the history. The omission of Chapter 25 is comparatively easy of explanation. Alfred did not care to instruct his people on the serious religious cleavages of a forgotten past; they were left in the obscurity into which they had in course of time naturally fallen.

The same feeling is evidenced in the opening words of the Fourth Book, where Bede describes the year of the great eclipse as that in which "Bishop Colman, being overcome by the united efforts of the Catholics, returned home." Alfred simply cuts out the words.

The summary of the contents of the several books and chapters of Alfred's *Bede*, which is placed immediately before his Book I, has the following statement of the contents of Chapter 15 of the Fifth Book:

'That many churches in Hibernia on the teaching of Athaman [Adamnan] accepted the catholic Easter: and of Ealdelm [Aldhelm] who wrote the book on Virginity and

many others : and also that the South Saxons received as their own bishops Eadberht and Eolla : and the West Saxons received Daniel and Aldelm : and of the writings of Aldelm.'

The headings of Bede's four chapters corresponding to this one chapter of Alfred are as follows :

15. Very many churches of the Scots at the instance of Adamnan adopted the catholic Easter ; and how the same man wrote a book about the holy places.

16. What he related in the same book of the place of the Lord's Nativity, Passion, and Resurrection.

17. What also he related of the place of our Lord's Ascension, and of the tombs of the Patriarchs.

18. How the South Saxons received Eadbert and Eolla, and the West Saxons Daniel and Aldhelm, as their bishops ; and of the writings of the same Aldhelm.

Although Alfred retained in his summary the mention of the Scots accepting the catholic date of Easter, the whole of the text of Bede in this connexion is omitted, without notice, in the Anglo-Saxon translation. It extends to five octavo pages in the Latin. The reason of the omission of Bede's Chapter 15 is best shown by giving the chapter direct from the Latin.

"At this time the largest part of the Scots in Hibernia, as also some of the Britons in Britain, adopted, by the gift of the Lord, the reasonable and ecclesiastical date for the observance of Easter. Adamnan, presbyter and abbat of the monks that were in the island Hii, was sent by his people by way of legation to Aldfrith, King of the Angles. He spent some time in that province and saw the canonical rites of the church. Further, he was admonished by many of the more learned men not to presume to live contrary to the custom of the Church either in the observance of Easter or in any respects, by retaining the practices of that very small body of men of his, seated in the most remote corner of the world. His mental attitude was changed. He most willingly preferred what he had seen and heard in the churches of the Angles. For he was a good and wise man, very nobly instructed in knowledge of the Scriptures.

"When he had returned to Iona, he endeavoured to bring his own people in the island, and those who were dependent on his monastery, into the way of truth which he had learned and had adopted with all his heart. But he did not succeed.

He then sailed over to Ireland, and by quiet exhortation as to the lawful time of Easter he brought over most of them, and almost all who were not under the authority of the monastery of Iona, to catholic unity and the true observance of Easter.

“Returning to his island, after celebrating the canonical Easter in Hibernia, he most earnestly inculcated the observance of the catholic rule for Easter in his own monastery, and still failed to gain his point. Before the time for Easter came round again he died, divine Providence so arranging it that he should be taken to the life eternal, rather than be left, a man most studious for unity and peace, to be forced at Easter-tide into grave discord with those who would not follow him into the way of truth.”

It is difficult to imagine any adequate reason for the omission of this graphic account by Alfred's translators, other than the feeling of tenderness for the reputation of Iona, unless, indeed, they were instructed not to follow Bede in places where he digressed from the history of the English. It cannot be seriously maintained that any such instruction was given, or, if given, was obeyed.

CHAPTER VI

Omission of Bede's summary of Adamnan's book on the Holy Places—
And of the letter of Naitan, King of the Picts, and Ceolfrith's reply—
Some of Alfred's omissions due to the existence of a first and a second
contemporary edition of *Bede's History*—*Bede* iv. 14, a later insertion in
the story of Wilfrith in Sussex—The expulsion of Bishop Acca of
Hexham—The miracle of the sick boy.

THERE followed in Bede's pages from the mention of Adamnan's visit to King Aldfrith, who was through his Irish mother distantly related to the abbat, an account of Adamnan's book on the Holy Places. Inasmuch as the English translators had cut out the mention of Adamnan, there was no reason for any mention of his book, and all mention of it was accordingly omitted. Here again it might be argued that the long account of the Holy Places was a clear digression from the *Ecclesiastical History of the English Race*, and was on that account omitted. But the manner in which Adamnan obtained his information on that remote subject, and the information itself, were of such interest that the omission was a real loss to the early English. Writing as we do at the date of the Nativity, in the year of grace in which by divine Providence Jerusalem has been freed from captivity, it seems right to give to modern English readers the words which Bede gave in the Latin to their ancestors nearly twelve hundred years ago, and Alfred did not give in English to their ancestors nearly two hundred years later.

“Adamnan wrote a book about the Holy Places, most useful to many readers. He obtained his information from Arculf, a Gallican bishop, who had visited Jerusalem to see the Holy Places, and having seen all the Land of Promise, travelled to Damascus, Constantinople, Alexandria, and many islands, and returning home by sea, was forced by a violent storm upon the western coast of Britain. He came eventually to Adamnan, who found him learned in the Scriptures and well informed on the Holy Places; received him with great kindness, and heard his story so carefully that he wrote

down what Arculf told him of what he had seen. Thus he composed a work beneficial to many, and particularly to those who were so far remote from the places where the patriarchs and apostles lived, that they could know nothing of them save what they could read. Adamnan gave this book to King Aldfrith, and by the king's kindness lesser persons were allowed to read it. I think it will be acceptable to my readers if I collect some particulars and set them down in my *History*.

"On the place of the Nativity he writes that Bethlehem, the city of David, is seated on a narrow ridge, encompassed on all sides by valleys, being a thousand paces in length from east to west, the wall low, without towers, built along the edge of the plateau on the summit. In the east angle thereof there is a sort of natural half-cave, the outer part of which is said to be where our Lord was born, the inner part is called the Manger of the Lord. This cave, all covered within with rich marble over the place where more particularly the tradition has it that the Lord was born, carries above it the great Church of St. Mary.

"Of the place of the Passion and the Resurrection he wrote in this manner: Entering the city of Jerusalem on the north side, the first place to be visited by convenient streets is the church of Constantine called the Martyrdom. It was built by the Emperor Constantine, magnificently and royally, on the spot where his mother Helena found the Cross of the Lord. Westward thence the church of Golgotha is seen, where the rock which once bore the Cross with the Lord's Body shows itself, bearing now a large silver cross with a great circle of brass hanging over it, carrying lamps. Under the actual spot where the Lord's Cross stood, a vault is hewn out of the rock, in which the sacrifice is offered upon an altar for important persons defunct, their bodies remaining meanwhile in the street. To the west of this again is the Anastasis, the round church of the Lord's Resurrection, encompassed by three walls and borne upon twelve columns. The entrance is on the east; against it is laid that great stone. The tomb shows still the marks of the tools within, but internally it is covered with marble to the very top of the rock, which is adorned with gold and bears a large golden cross. In the north part of the tomb the sepulchre of our Lord is hewn out of the same rock, seven feet in length and three palms above the floor, the entrance

being on the south side, where twelve lamps burn day and night, four within the sepulchre and eight above on the right-hand side. The stone which was laid at the entrance to the sepulchre is now cleft in two; the lesser part of it stands as a square altar before the entrance, the larger part remains as a quadrangular altar in the eastern part of the said church, under linen cloths. The colour of the monument and of the sepulchre is a mixture of white and red.

“Of the place of the Lord’s Ascension the aforesaid author writes as follows: Mount Olivet is equal in height to Mount Sion, but exceeds it in length and breadth, with few trees beyond vines and olives, rich in wheat and barley. The quality of the soil is suited to grass and flowers, not to heavy trees. At the highest point, where the Lord ascended to the heavens, is a large round church, having round it three porches roofed over. The inner part of the church could not be roofed or covered, because of the passage of the Lord’s Body; it has an altar on the east, covered with a narrow roof. In the midst are seen the last prints of the Lord’s feet, the sky left open above, where He ascended. Though the earth is daily carried away by believers, it still remains and keeps the appearance of being marked with the impression of footsteps. Round this is a circle of brass, as high as a man’s neck, with an entrance on the west and a great lamp hanging on a pulley above it, burning night and day. In the western part of the church are eight windows, each with a lamp hanging by cords in front of it. The light of these lamps shines through the glass and can be seen in Jerusalem, striking the hearts of spectators with a sense of mingled joy and compunction. Every year when Ascension comes round and mass has been celebrated, they say that a gust of strong wind rushes down and casts to the ground those who are in the church.

“Of the site of Hebron and the tombs of the Fathers he writes thus: Hebron, once the city and metropolis of the kingdom of David, now shows only by its ruins what it once was. At a furlong distance towards the east it has a double cave in a valley, where the sepulchres of the patriarchs are, surrounded by a squared wall, the heads lying to the north. Each is covered with a single stone, worked like a church, those of the three Patriarchs of a white colour, Adam’s of ruder work, not far from theirs, at the northern extremity. The memorials of three women also are seen,

smaller and poorer. The hill of Mamre is a thousand paces from the monuments, towards the north, very rich in herbage and flowers, with a flat plain at the top, in the northern part of which the Oak of Abraham, a trunk the height of two men, is enclosed in a church.

"Thus much we have collected from the writings of the said author, giving the sense of his words but in briefer form, and have thought fit to include in our History, for the benefit of those who read it. Any one who desires to see more of the contents of this book may read it in the book itself or in the careful epitome which we have recently made."

The famous answer to the letter which Naitan, the King of "the Picts who occupy the north part of Britain," wrote to Abbat Ceolfrith "of the monastery of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, which is at the mouth of Wear, and at the place called Jarrow by the river Tyne," occupies thirteen octavo pages in the Latin. Naitan had considerable knowledge of the subjects on which he wrote to Ceolfrith, namely, the true time of keeping Easter and the correct form of the tonsure, but he wished to have a full statement of the arguments in favour of the catholic practice in these respects. He also wished to have a church built in his land after the Roman manner, and he begged that Ceolfrith would send him church-builders who could carry out this desired work. He promised to dedicate the church to St. Peter if Ceolfrith acceded to his request. This promise of the dedication of a Pictish church to St. Peter acquires special interest now that modern investigations are said to have shown—though not too conclusively—that the churches in those far northern regions were called by the names of the hermits who put together the first rough stones, or of the principal local saints of the region, or of the Columbite missionaries.

Ceolfrith sent to Naitan the church-builders, and he sent the long letter of statement and argument to which we have referred. It appears probable that Bede wrote the letter. It is full of the complicated arguments which lie behind our rule for Easter Day,—“Easter Day is always the First Sunday after the full moon which happens upon or next after the Twenty-first day of March; and if the full moon happens upon a Sunday, Easter Day is the Sunday after.” It deals with the physical symbolism and the spiritual

mysteries of the tonsure, and allows that if in all other respects there is soundness of catholic faith and practice, the error in the shape and manner of the tonsure is not to be regarded as absolutely fatal. The tonsure leads Ceolfrith to describe the visit of Adamnan and the conversations Ceolfrith held with him on the subject of the various usages ; a very interesting description, enabling us to picture to ourselves the two excellent and earnest men engaged in courteous controversy.

Of all this Alfred's version gives not a word. He merely says that the letter was received, and passes straight on to its result in the complete and grateful acceptance of its teaching by the Pictish king.

King Alfred, or his translator of Bede, has been credited with some intentional divergences from the Latin original which are in fact not due to either the king or his deputy. Dr. Plummer has shown conclusively, in his Introduction¹ to his two volumes on Bede's historical works, that the manuscripts of the Latin text fall under two classes. One class is represented by the Moore MS. at Cambridge mentioned above, named by Dr. Plummer M, written on the Continent, perhaps at Epternach or some such Anglo-Saxon colony, in or about the year 737, very soon after Bede's death. The other is represented by another eighth-century manuscript, in the British Museum, named by Dr. Plummer C, which is certainly a Durham book, possibly originally brought from Lindisfarne. Further, the Moore manuscript does not stand alone at the head of its class, as had been supposed. There is a sister-manuscript of the same century, named by Dr. Plummer B, in the British Museum. The differences between M and B are many and considerable ; on the other hand, the agreement between the two is so obvious, instanced in countless minute details, that the two are certainly taken from one and the same source. Thus the Moore manuscript is not the transcendent authority, even in its own class, that it has been supposed to be, and M and B have an authoritative competitor in C. From this it follows that we cannot attribute differences from M, the hitherto received text of Bede, to the intention of Alfred or his translator, at least until we have ascertained that the translation differs also from B on the one hand and on the other hand from C.

Dr. Plummer has shown good evidence that after Bede

¹ Pages lxxxi-xcvii.

had finished his *History* in 731, at which date his chronological summary in the M class stops, additions were made, still in his lifetime we may suppose. The years 733 and 734 are added, Bede's death occurring, as is usually supposed, in 735, in Dr. Plummer's view in 734. Curiously enough, the wording of the addition of the events of these two years enables us to say that the addition was made before July 30 in the year 734, at which date Archbishop Tatwin, named in the addition as living, is known to have died.

In some marked respects, Alfred's translation agrees with the C type of manuscript. Thus the transference of Bede's request for the prayers of his readers from the end of his Preface to the end of his *History*, which we have mentioned above as a divergence from the received text, is in accordance with the C texts. And the very important omissions on a large scale, of which much has been made, the omission of Chapter 14 of the Fourth Book and of Chapter 32 of the Third Book, are certainly not the doing of the translator. They were not in his Latin manuscript.

We may take first the case of Chapter 14 of the Fourth Book, which is entirely omitted by Alfred. In this so-called omission he is merely keeping close to his copy, a C manuscript. It would be much more difficult to explain the presence of Chapter 14 than it is to explain its absence. It is a *mal à propos* insertion in the very interesting story of the conversion of Sussex and the foundation of the see of Selsey, now Chichester. Alfred's translation of the story itself accurately follows Bede's graphic narrative.

Wilfrith, the chief bishop of Northumbria, had been driven out of his native province, and after several wanderings had penetrated through high downs and deep forests into the territory of the South Saxons. They were still pagans in 681, though their king Ethelwalch had been converted and baptized in Mercia, by the persuasion of Wulfhere, a younger son of the slaughterous old pagan Penda. Wilfrith won the hearts of the people by feeding them in the time of a famine so hopelessly severe that forty or fifty men at a time would go to the precipitous cliffs and, hand in hand, would throw themselves over, and so perish by drowning or by the fall. Wilfrith found that the sea and the rivers abounded in fish, but the people had no adequate means of catching them; they only had small nets which they placed at the mouth of narrow creeks, and so secured the eels which

had come up with the tide. He collected the eel-nets, joined a number of them together, and swept the sea with them. They got three hundred fish of several sorts, of which they gave a hundred to the poor, a hundred to the owners of the nets, and the remaining hundred they kept for the use of the body of monks. Thus, King Alfred's Book tells, following Bede accurately, the people 'began more readily, from the bishop's teaching, to hope for heavenly blessings, because by his instrumentality they received and enjoyed temporal blessings. At this time,' still quoting Alfred throughout, 'King Ethelwalch gave and assigned¹ to the venerable Bishop Wilfrith seven-and-eighty hides of the land which is called Sylesea,² for the settlement of his followers who were in exile with him. The place is surrounded on every side except the west by the sea; there is an entrance on this side, as broad as a man can throw with a sling.³ When the bishop took over the place, he set up a monastery there, establishing it under regular discipline, chiefly of the brethren he had brought with him. This his successors in the episcopate still hold and possess⁴ to this day. In these parts the venerable Bishop Wilfrith discharged with honour the duties of a bishop for five years, that is, till the death of King Egfrith. And as King Ethelwalch, along with the possession of the aforesaid place, assigned and made over to him all the property to be found there with land and men, so he established all in the faith of Christ, and washed them in the laver of baptism. Of these he baptized 250 slaves, men and women; and as he by baptism saved them all from the devil's service, so he also released and freed them from human servitude. Meanwhile Ceadwalla, a prince of the West Saxons, young and valiant and then an exile, came with an army and slew King Ethelwalch and ruined the province by dire slaughter and devastation. But he was soon expelled by the king's chief men, Berhthun and Andhun, who afterwards held the government of that province. The former of these was slain by Ceadwalla when he was King of the West Saxons, and the province was reduced under oppressive servitude. Also Ine, who succeeded Ceadwalla

¹ Bede merely says *donavit*: Alfred uses two words, a technical phrase.

² Selsey. Bede's statement of the gift is "land of 87 families, at the place called Selæseu, which means the island of the sea calf," the seal.

³ Which sort of place is called by the Latins a peninsula, by the Greeks a chersonesus, Bede adds.

⁴ Probably a legal phrase. Bede merely says *tenere noscuntur*.

on the throne, ill-treated the province with similar severities, for a period of many years. For this cause, during all this time they could not have a bishop of their own, but when Bishop Wilfrith, their first bishop, was recalled home, they then were placed under the West Saxon bishops, who lived at Winchester.'

That all runs smoothly and regularly on, without any sign of a hiatus or omission. It agrees exactly with the text of C. But before the words "Meanwhile Ceadwalla," the M texts have a long insertion, prefaced by the words "In which monastery," words which do not follow naturally upon the preceding words and sentences and statements. Whence this insertion comes, who inserted it in M or excluded it from C, no one seems to have explained or suggested. The inserted chapter is sufficiently interesting in itself. Its opening words (page 233) are clearly meant to be the actual words of Bede, who was an intimate personal friend of Acca of Hexham; thus the unsolved question reduces itself to this, why did the C text not include it? To which it might be answered that it was inserted after the C text had been settled.

But there are serious difficulties in the way. Bede says in the M texts that the story used to be told him by his friend Bishop Acca. The later part of Acca's life is obscure, and the date of his death is doubtful, the best modern authorities placing it in 740. He had been driven out of his see of Hexham, for some unexplained reason, some three years before the death of Bede.¹ The continuator of Bede's chronological summary which ended in the year 731, has as his first entry this: "Anno 731. Ceolwulf the king was seized and tonsured, and was restored to the kingdom: Acca the bishop was driven out of his see." Dr. Plummer takes it that this collocation of events shows that the expulsion was connected with the revolution which tonsured the king. Haddan and Stubbs look for a more definite cause of the expulsion. They hold (iii. 313) that it was connected with the scheme for the establishment of a northern province. The life of Wilfrid II of York was near its close, and King Ceolwulf's first cousin Ecgbert was probably designated as his successor. Wilfrid II died in 732 and Ecgbert succeeded

¹ To increase the confusion of dates and events connected with Acca, William of Malmesbury places the expulsion three years *after* the death of Bede.

in 734. Ceolwulf continued to reign, after his restoration, and died in 737, when he was succeeded by Ecgbert's older brother Eadbert.

We may take it as certain that there were two parties in the State, keenly at variance as is shown by the violence offered to Ceolwulf, and two parties in the Church, keenly at variance on the question of a complete reconstruction of ecclesiastical affairs. Party feeling was likely to be very strong at Lindisfarne, and the guardians of the original of the C text may have refused to admit a long insertion, dislocating the continuity of the story of Sussex, and specially honouring Acca, whom party feeling either in State or in Church had driven from his see.

There is yet another difficulty in the case. This is not the only occasion on which Bede's *History* has a record of miracle attested by Acca. The two stories have this in common, that in each case Bede begins the story by special reference to the great pestilence which ravaged the whole land. But any one reading the two stories in an ordinary way would say that the first, *H.E.* iii. 13, was written in Acca's lifetime, and the second, *H.E.* iv. 14, now under discussion, after his death. Bede's language is carefully chosen, and it certainly leads to that conclusion. The chapter iii. 13 opens with the statement that—The most reverend prelate Acca is wont to relate (*referre solet*) that etc. Later on, Bede quotes Acca directly: "At the time, said he, of the mortality which made such havoc" etc. (*Tempore, inquit, mortalitatis*). In iv. 14 Bede writes: "We have thought it right to place on record one miracle which the most reverend prelate Acca used frequently to relate to me."

While it is true that the statement in iv. 14 suggests that Acca was dead, it is, on the other hand, scarcely conceivable that Bede could have quoted him without a word of affection for one who wrote to him as "most beloved," *dilectissime*, and to whom he wrote as "dearest," *carissime*, and without any expression of sorrow for his death. We are thus driven to suppose that Acca was still living when this was added to the *History* by Bede, but had gone away out of Bede's reach. This is in accordance with a tradition that on leaving the see of Hexham Acca went away and ministered in the Pictish districts of Galloway. The most likely suggestion is that Bede wrote of Acca as one who had left the district,

and so used the *solebat*, "used to relate," but on considerations of high policy he judged it not wise to refer more pointedly to the expulsion of his friend. Some such consideration may have caused the monks to refrain from inserting the story in the C text, if indeed they were not partisans of the opponents of Acca.

The story itself is well worth a place here. Direct history is far from being our best guide to an understanding of the tones of thought of the times of which the history tells. The personal stories which very human historians admit to a place in their writings are the best help to such understanding. That is evidently true of this story. Further than that, such stories enable us to realize the personality of the historian, and that is always an interesting feature of what may be called living history. It will be noticed that it does not fit into its place, either as following Chapter 13 or as preceding Chapter 15.

"In which monastery manifestations of heavenly grace are said to have been shown forth at that time, for the tyranny of the devil having recently been driven out, the faith of Christ began to reign. I have thought it right to hand down to memory one of these manifestations, which the most reverend Bishop Acca was wont to relate to me, affirming that it had been told him by most credible brothers of the same monastery.

"About the time when the South Saxons had received the name of Christ, a cruel mortality had ravaged many provinces of Britain. By divine dispensation the scourge reached the monastery, which was then governed by a most religious priest of Christ, by name Eappa. Many of those who had come with the bishop, Wilfrith, and also of those who had joined them of the South Saxons, were carried off from this world. It seemed right to the brethren to keep a three days' fast, to implore the divine clemency to have mercy upon them, either by delivering from death those who were attacked by the distemper, or by saving from eternal condemnation the souls of those who died.

"There was at that time in the monastery a little Saxon boy, lately called to the faith, who had long been confined to his bed by this disease. On the second day of the fast and prayer, it chanced that the boy was left alone where he lay, about the second hour of the day. By divine arrange-

ment, the most blessed chiefs of the Apostles¹ deigned to appear to him suddenly, the boy being of very simple and innocent mind, faithfully and devoutly keeping the sacraments of the faith which he had received. The Apostles saluted him with most kindly words, saying to him, 'Fear not death, my son, about which you are anxious, for we have come to take you this day to the kingdom of heaven. You must wait till masses are celebrated and you have received the viaticum of the Lord's Body and Blood, so that absolved from sickness and death you may be carried up to eternal joys in the heavens. Call to you therefore the priest Eappa, and tell him that the Lord has heard your prayers and has favourably regarded the fasting and devotion. Beyond you, not one of this monastery or of its dependents outside shall die of this plague. All of your people, anywhere, who are suffering from it shall be released from pain and restored to their former health. You alone shall be delivered by death this day and carried into heaven to behold the Lord Christ whom you have faithfully served. This favour the divine mercy has deigned to confer upon you, moved thereto by the intercession of the religious King Oswald, loved of God, who formerly reigned with sublime devotion over the nation of the Northumbrians, with the power both of temporal rule and of that Christian piety which leads to a heavenly kingdom. For on this day that king was slain in the body by infidels in battle, and was taken up to the eternal joys of the soul in heaven, and was joined to the number of the elect. Let them look in the list which contains the names of those departed. They will find that on this day, as we have said, he was rapt from this world. They must therefore celebrate masses in all the oratories of this monastery, whether in thanksgiving that their prayers have been heard, or in memory of the king, Oswald, who once governed their nation and on that account prayed the Lord for them as united to those of his race. Then all the brethren must come together to the church and partake of the heavenly sacrifices, that they may bring the fast to an end and supply the needs of the body."

The boy called the priest and told him all this. The priest inquired carefully as to the appearance of the men. They were of noble habit and countenance, most joyous and

¹ *Beatissimi apostolorum principes.*

beautiful. He had never seen such men. He could not have imagined that there were men of such grace and comeliness. One of them was shorn as a cleric, the other had a long beard. They said that one was called Paul, the other Peter; they were servants of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, sent by him from heaven to protect the monastery. The priest believed what the boy told him; looked in his Annal-book and found that on that very day King Oswald was slain. He summoned the brethren; bade them prepare a meal, celebrate masses, and all communicate in the customary manner; and ordered a particle of the sacrifice of the Lord's oblation to be brought to the sick boy.

The boy died soon after, on the same day, proving by his death the truth of what he had heard from the Apostles of Christ. A further proof was, that no one but himself, of that monastery, died on that occasion. Many who heard of this vision were wonderfully moved to pray for divine mercy in time of affliction and to resort to the salutary remedy of fasting. From that time the natal day of that king and soldier of Christ was kept in each year with celebration of masses, not in that monastery alone, but in many other places too.

CHAPTER VII

Differences in the earliest Latin texts—Insertion of iv. 32, probably by Bede—Bede's suppressions, Alchfrith and Wilfrith—The Council at Nidd—Wilfrith's vision—His dedication of churches—Selsey and Chichester.

AN interesting difference between Alfred and Bede is found at the close of iv. 30. Bede remarks that miracles of healing had been wrought at the place of burial, some of which he had given in the *Lives of the Abbats*. To these he would now add some others which have lately come to our knowledge (*quae nos nuper audisse contigit*). That is the reading of the M text.

The manuscripts of the C type put it thus: "Mention has been made of miracles in the book of his Life; I will in this *History* add one, of which I happen to have heard recently." He proceeds to tell it at considerable length in chapter 31, and the conclusion of that chapter is evidently the end of the mention of Cuthbert and the end of Book IV. With all of this Alfred's text exactly agrees. The translator was evidently working on a C manuscript.

The M manuscript and its class, as we have seen, make Bede say that he will add mention of some miracles of which he has recently heard. Bede then gives the thirty-first chapter exactly as the C manuscripts do, with its evident complete finish, and then the M manuscript gives a rather long description of an additional miracle which had been told to Bede three years before by the very brother to whom it happened. Of this, C and Alfred have no mention. It seems clear that what has been called Alfred's omission of iv. 32 is no omission. He was working on what we may call Bede's first edition and had no knowledge of a second edition.

Of the existence of such second edition, or at least of a corrected first edition, there is a curious and telling evidence. In iv. 18 Bede mentions Benedict Biscop, "of whom," he says, "we have made mention above," *cuius supra memi-*

nimus. As a matter of fact he had not previously mentioned Benedict in the *History*. He had written Abbat Benedict's Life in *The Lives of the Abbats*, and no doubt he was thinking of this. The Moore manuscript has the words, the C manuscripts and Alfred have them not. As C is a Durham manuscript, it may have been that the Lindisfarne monks, who knew well both the *History* and the *Lives*, discovered the slip, and corrected it in their original copy.

Chapter 31 of the Fourth Book, which is found in the M and the C texts of the Latin, and in Alfred, tells of one Bethwegen, a monk of Lindisfarne, who was still living when Bede wrote. He was an attendant in the hospital. On a certain day he took the cloths or clothes used in the hospital and washed them in the sea. On his way back he was struck with palsy. He so far recovered that he was able to drag himself to the church and pray at Cuthbert's resting-place. He fell into a stupor, felt a large broad hand touch his head where the pain was, and awoke to find himself cured. He joyfully returned to the duties of the office which he had so faithfully performed.

"The very garments," Bede continues in both sets of manuscript, "which had been on Cuthbert's body dedicated to God, whether in life or after death, ceased not in the grace of healing, as any one will find who looks in the volume of his life and miracles."

That makes a complete finish of the mention of St. Cuthbert in the *History*, and of Book IV; Book V begins with an account of Ethelwold, who succeeded Cuthbert in 687. But the M manuscript interposes, "Nor is a miracle to be passed over in silence which was performed by his relics three years ago, told to me recently by the brother for whom it was wrought." The name of the young monk is not given.

The scene of the miracle was the monastery at Dacore (Dacre), taking its name, Bede says, from the river on which it was situated. A youth there had a swelling on his eyelid. The swelling grew till it threatened the loss of the eye. The surgeons did what they could to bring it to a head, all in vain. They durst not cut it off, for fear of worse happening. It was suddenly cured, through the divine goodness, by means of relics of the holy father, Cuthbert.

When the brethren of Lindisfarne, on their examination of the body of the departed saint some years after death,

found the body uncorrupted, they took some part of the hair, to show as evidence of the uncorrupted state of the body. One of the priests at Dacore, Thridred by name, who in Bede's time was abbat there, had some small portion of these relics. One day he opened the box, in the church, to give some part to a friend who had begged for it. Having given some to his friend, he delivered the rest to the attendant to put the box in its place. The attendant was the youth with the swollen eyelid; he took the opportunity of touching the swelling with the hair. "It was then about the second hour of the day"—the same hour as in the miraculous vision in iv. 14. "The youth was very busy with his work for the day, and it was not till the sixth hour that he touched the eyelid. He found the eye and the lid as perfectly sound as if there had never been any affection or tumour."

That is not a well-balanced ending to Bede's account of St. Cuthbert, nor to one of the five books of his *History*.

In this case no question can arise as to reasons political or ecclesiastical for the absence of the story from the C texts. It was a later addition by Bede, or from Bede's pen or mouth, not fitting well into the place where we find it.

While we are bound to acquit King Alfred of the charge of making omissions for personal or partisan reasons, we cannot acquit the Venerable Bede of a like charge or suspicion or criticism. His treatment of the history of Wilfrith is the chief case in point. That uneasy Saint's story, with its ups and downs, covered some thirty-one years of Bede's life, the ordinary date of his first expulsion from the northern see in which Bede lived being 678, when Bede was about five years of age, and his death came in 709, when Bede was about thirty-six years of age. The dates of the great constitutional events of Wilfrith's life have been skilfully revised of late by Dr. Lane Poole; but for our present purpose we need not enter upon that careful revision. Bede had practised the art of suppression in the case of Wilfrith's patron King Alchfrith. The result of that suppression is that we are left to guess at the causes of the total disappearance of the sub-king Alchfrith of Deira from the pages of history, though we have the noble monument erected in his memory at Bewcastle.¹

¹ See my *Cross-shafts of Bewcastle and Ruthwell*, Cambridge University Press, 1916.

It would be long to go through the several omissions in Bede's account of Wilfrith and his controversial attitude and his appeals to Rome. We must confine ourselves to one important example in the latest years of his life. We turn to the nineteenth chapter of the Fifth Book.

Wilfrith, who had once again been expelled from his see, had obtained letters from the Pope directing his restoration. Aldfrith, the King of Northumbria, disdained to receive him. The king died soon after, and was succeeded by his son Osred, a boy. Immediately on his accession a synod was held on the banks of the river Nidd in Yorkshire. At that synod, when Bede was about twenty-seven years old and had been seven or eight years in deacon's orders, Bede records that "after some contention on both sides, at length, by the consent of all, Wilfrith was restored to the government of his own church," the bishopric, as Alfred puts it. That is all Bede has to say.

Eddi, Wilfrith's chaplain and historian, has fortunately given us an account of what took place. It is one of the most graphic stories in all our church history, and it is a revelation of the position of women among the Anglo-Saxons. It is a great loss to us that Bede did not include it in his *History*, and so we do not know what Alfred would have made of it. It would have lost nothing in his hands.

The scene was dramatic. The young king was there, and his three bishops, and the abbats. Elfeda the Abbess of Whitby was there, Oswy's daughter, the king's aunt, "always the comforter and best adviser of the whole province." She had halted at Hackness on her way from Driffild, where Aldfrith died, and had brought with her the famous abbess of that famous abbey. Brihtwald, Archbishop of Canterbury 693 to 731, was there; he and Wilfrith arrived on the same day. The great laymen were there. Brihtwald and Wilfrith received permission to read their letters from the Apostolic See, the *sedes Apostolorum*. The layman next in rank to the king, Berechtfrith, rose, and said they would like to know what the words they had heard meant. "The judgments of the Apostolic See are expressed," the Archbishop replied, "in a long round of dubious words; but there is the same meaning in both letters." The meaning was that either they must restore Wilfrith to parts of the

ecclesiastical possessions he formerly ruled ; or all must go to the Apostolic See and have the matter settled there ; or king, layman, and priest, all would be cut off from the Body and Blood of Christ.

The answer was that the whole thing had been settled by Theodore and Ecgfrith. After that, at Austerfield, almost the whole of the bishops of Britain, in presence of Brihtwald himself, had confirmed that settlement and not agreed to the injunctions from Rome. How could any one alter that ! They were resolved not to change.

But then some new evidence was produced, of a highly authoritative character. A special authority attached to the last word and expressed will of a man, the *ultima voluntas*, the last will and testament ; in this case the last will and testament of the monarch recently deceased. Elfleda spoke. She had been with her brother Aldfrith when he died. He had, as we have seen, scorned to pay attention to Wilfrith and his papal documents. But Elfleda stated that Aldfrith on his death-bed charged her to tell his son, in the name of the Lord, that for the remedy of his father's soul he must fulfil the Apostolic judgment, restoring Wilfrith.

On hearing this Berechtfrith gave the judgment of the synod in that sense. He confirmed it by another sacrosanct piece of history. When they were hard pressed at the siege of Bamborough, and were sheltering in a narrow place in the rock, "we vowed," he said, "that if God gave to our royal boy the kingdom of his father, we would fulfil the Apostolic mandate. As soon as our vow was taken, the hostile forces came over to us ; the gates were opened ; we were free ; the kingdom was restored."

We may close with the omission by Bede of the striking conclusion of a vision which appeared to Wilfrith four years before his death. Alfred describes the vision and its surroundings in a close but free rendering of Bede's original Latin.

Wilfrith had been at Rome on his latest visit of complaint against the rulers at home. 'When he was on his way back and had reached the districts of Gaul, he was suddenly seized with illness so severe that at last he could neither walk nor ride, but was carried in a litter by the hands of his attendants, and so was brought to a place in mid-Gaul.¹

¹ Maeldum, Bede says ; that is, Meaux.

There he lay four days and four nights like one dead, only showing that he was alive by feeble breathing. When he had thus continued without meat or drink, speaking or hearing, at last at the dawn of the fifth day he awoke, as if out of heavy sleep, raised himself and sat up, and opening his eyes, saw about him companies of brethren chanting and weeping. So he sat for some time, and sighed. Then he asked and inquired where Acca the mass-priest was. Acca was at once called, and he went in to him and saw that he was better and could speak, and he bent his knee and thanked God with all the brethren who were in there by him.

'When they had sat together for some time, and began timidly to talk a little about the divine decrees of God Almighty, the bishop bade the others to go out for a while, and thus spoke to Acca the priest: There appeared to me a short time ago a dreadful vision, which I will relate and make known to you; and I bid you conceal it and keep it back, till I know what it is God's will to do with me. There came and stood by me a man very bright and shining in white raiment; he said that he was Michael the archangel, and, "I am sent for this, that I should rescue and deliver you from death. The Lord has given you life through the prayers and tears of your disciples and your brethren, and the intercession of his blessed mother the immaculate virgin St. Mary. Therefore I tell you that you will soon be cured of this disorder. But be ready; for after four years I will return again and visit you. You will reach your country, and recover the greatest part of your property that was taken from you, and will end your life in peace and tranquillity.'" Thus far Alfred and Bede; they proceed to make the brief statement about the Council at Nidd which we quoted above.

The story of this vision is told us by Wilfrith's chaplain and friend Eddi, from whose account Bede presumably extracted the above passage. But Eddi makes a strikingly interesting addition to the story, for the omission of which by Bede it is not easy to account. According to Eddi the Archangel charged Wilfrith to bear in mind that while he had dedicated churches to the Apostles Andrew and Peter, Hexham, namely, and Ripon, to the Blessed Mary he had built none. We have not any evidence that in the four

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years of life which still remained to Wilfrith he remedied this oversight.

The statement that Wilfrith had not dedicated any church to St. Mary has a bearing upon the complicated question of the dedication of the Cathedral Church of Chichester, which represents the original Church of Selsey, founded by Wilfrith; Chichester is said to be dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Leland says that Selsey was dedicated to St. Mary. If the archangel was correct in his statement, this was not the dedication of Selsey. The story of the two apostles at Selsey would naturally suggest that the dedication was the usual dedication to the twin Princes of the Church, St. Peter and St. Paul. Curiously enough there is support for the view. A famous charter of the year 780, dated at Selsey, the church to which an important gift is made is called the Church of St. Paul; and in a charter of Duke Aldulph of the West Saxons Selsey is said to be dedicated to St. Peter. The evidence that the Church of Chichester is dedicated to the Holy Trinity is said to be found in the *Annals of Winton*, under the year 1199. But the entry there only says "dedicata est ecclesia Cicestriæ a Sefredo ejusdem loci episcopo ii Idus Septembres." A Selsey charter of the time of Archbishop Odo begins with the unusual invocation, "In nomine Sanctæ Trinitatis."

CHAPTER VIII

Willibrord and the Frisian mission—The Heawalds—Consecration of Swithberht in Mercia and Willibrord at Rome—Heirship of ecclesiastical property—Willibrord's Calendar.

WE may dwell for a time upon Alfred's account of the mission of Willibrord to the Frisians and to Germany. Alfred was specially interested in missions to the lands whence the Angles and Saxons came to Britain. The story is specially interesting to us, also, because it shows us the influence of Anglo-Saxon advisers upon the Frankish mayors of the Palace, of which Willibrord was the first link. Pepin of Herstal and Charles Martel were his friends; and he baptized Pepin le Bref. Under Boniface's influence Pepin le Bref consolidated his power and became king, and Karl came to man's estate. After Boniface's martyrdom, his relative Leoba was the friend and adviser of the royal people, especially of Hiltegard, Karl's queen, till close upon the time when Alcuin of York met Karl and became his minister of education and adviser in affairs ecclesiastical and liturgical, and even in his acception or assumption of the empire. From Willibrord's first acquaintance with Pepin in 690 to Alcuin's death in 804, very few years passed without Anglo-Saxon influence on the several members of the house of Pepin. It is an interesting fact that not Willibrord only but also and especially Wilfrith, had much help from the *fainéant* Merovingian king Dagobert.

The following is Alfred's rendering of Bede's story (v. 9-11) of the inception and course of the Frisian Mission:

'At this time Christ's venerable servant and priest, the holy Ecbriht, of whom we have already said that he lived as an exile in the land of Ireland to make atonement for the sake of the eternal home in heaven, now proposed and thought in his mind to benefit many, being desirous to imitate the work of the Apostles, by teaching and preaching God's word and gospel to some of the nations who had not yet heard it. He knew that there were many of those tribes

in Germany, from which had come the Angles and Saxons who now inhabit Britain.¹ These were the Frisians, the Rugini, the Danes, the Huns, the Old Saxons, the Bructeri.² There were also many other nations in those parts, still addicted to heathen worship, to whom the aforesaid champion of Christ desired to come by sailing round Britain, in hopes that he there might rescue some from the devil, and bring them over to Christ; or if this might not be, he intended to visit Rome by this way and see the holy places of the blessed apostles³ and martyrs of Christ, and pray there. But he was prevented from achieving or carrying out either object by revelations and practical obstacles interposed by heaven. When he had chosen companions, who both in conduct and learning were energetic and sagacious to teach and preach God's word, and when all things had been prepared which seemed necessary for voyagers, there came to him one day early in the morning one of the brethren, who formerly in Britain had been a pupil and attendant of Bosel (Boisil), the priest well loved of God, when prior of the monastery at Melrose under Abbat Eata, as already mentioned. He related to him his vision, which had appeared to him that night, in these words: "When we had finished matins and prayers and I had stretched my limbs on the bed and a light sleep had come over me, then my former master and foster-father, my dearest Bosel, appeared to me and asked me whether I could recognize him. Yes, said I, you are my Bosel. Then he said: I have come here to deliver the errand of our Lord and Saviour to Ecgberht, which you, however, must report and make known to him. Tell him of a truth that he may not carry out the journey which he proposed; for God's will is that he should proceed to the monastery of St. Columb and teach there." Columb was the first teacher of the faith of Christ in the moorlands which are in the north of the Pictish dominions.⁴ And he

¹ The Anglo-Saxon version here omits a very curious and interesting statement by Bede, of the truth of which no other evidence seems to have been preserved, to the effect that because the Angles and Saxons came from "Germany," the neighbouring race of the Britons—presumably, the Britons of the west and north-west in Bede's time—called the Angles and Saxons *Garmans*.

² Fresan, Rugine, Dæne, Huna, Aldseaxan, Boructuare.

³ "To see and adore the thresholds of the holy Apostles and martyrs of Christ." This was the dominant reason for visiting and venerating Rome. See "The Cultus of St. Peter and St. Paul," among "Essays in the Importance of Women in Anglo-Saxon Times, etc.," by G. F. Browne, S.P.C.K., 1919.

⁴ *Peohta rices*. This mention of the moorlands is a curiously accurate variation from Bede, who says merely "beyond the mountains northward."

first built and established the monastery in the island Hi,¹ which long remained an object of veneration to many tribes of the Picts and Scots; this was the same Columb whom the Scots afterwards called Columcille.²

'When Ecgberht heard the words of the vision, he charged the brother to tell the visit to no man, saying that it might easily have appeared to him through illusion. Yet, when he considered the matter in silence, he feared it was true; still he did not any the more relax his preparations for the journey, on which he proposed proceeding to instruct the nations. But after a few days the aforesaid brother came to him once more, and reported to him that Bosel had appeared that same night to him, when matins were over, and had said: "Why did you report so carelessly, and in such a lukewarm spirit, what I directed you to tell Ecgberht? Go now and say to him that, whether he will or no he is to go to the monastery of Columb, for their ploughs go not straight, and he shall direct them into a right course." On hearing these words, he again charged the brother not to disclose or make it known further to any one. And though assured by the appearance of the vision, nevertheless he prepared for his journey with the aforesaid brethren. When they had loaded the ship with the things which the needs of so long a journey required, and had waited many days for wind and weather, there arose one night a storm so furious and violent that many things on board ship were lost, and the ship was cast away and lay on her side in the waves.³ Then the man of God perceived that he might not proceed, and said: I know that this storm has come and was sent on my account.⁴ And he withdrew from the expedition and returned home dispirited. However, one of his companions, he was named Wihtberht, who had renounced the world and was celebrated for his knowledge of the word of God, and had lived as an exile and hermit many years in Ireland a life of great perfection, embarked, and arrived in Friesland, and for two years uninterruptedly preached and taught the word of God and

¹ Iona. As is stated on page 215, the island's name had no consonant. The Latin *Ioua insula* was misread *Iona insula*, whence the common name Iona.

² Pehta 7 Scotta. Bede says that "some" (not "the Scots") called him Columcille, and adds that the name was derived from Columba and Cella.

³ Alfred omits a telling point in Bede's narrative, "Nevertheless all that belonged to Ecgbert and his companions was saved." It is permitted to wonder why, unless it is merely a question between two differing manuscripts of the Latin.

⁴ In the original Latin Bede quotes this from Jonah i. 12.

of salvation to the people and their king Rædbedd. Yet he could not gain any fruit for such long toil among the barbarians. Then he returned back to the well-loved place of his exile, and lived to the Lord in his wonted retirement. And as he might not be of use to those without in the faith, he made it his care to be all the more of use to his companions by the benefit and example of his virtues.

'Now when the man of God Ecgberht saw that he was not permitted to preach to the nations the word of God, but was kept for other services for the holy church, about which he was forewarned by divine revelation, and that Wihtberht had accomplished nothing though he visited those countries, he still undertook to send forth, for the work of the word, twelve holy and earnest men, whose chief was Wilbrord, a priest of high merit. When they had landed in the country, they turned first to Pipin, the King of the Franks, and were gratefully welcomed by him. And as he had lately overrun the further¹ Frisian districts, and driven thence their king Rædbedd, he sent them there to preach and teach the word of God. He also supported them with his royal authority, that they might not receive any annoyance or injury, and conferred many favours on those who were willing to receive the faith of Christ.

'Their example was followed by two priests of English descent, who had long lived in Ireland for the love of the kingdom of heaven. They came to the country of the Old Saxons, in hopes that they might win some there to Christ by their teaching. They were both called by the same name, as they were one also in devotion. Both were called Heawald. There was, however, this distinction, that, owing to the different colour of their hair, the one was called the black Heawald, the other the white. Both of them had been piously educated; however the black Heawald had received more training in knowledge of Scripture. When they came to the Old Saxons, they sought hospitality from a certain town-reeve [*tungerefa*] and begged him to forward them on to the chief [*aldorman*] who was his superior; they said they had an important errand and important business to convey to him. For these Old Saxons had no proper king; but many chiefs [*monige aldormen*]

¹ The Latin naturally names this part of Frisia, being the nearest to Pepin, "hither" or "nearer" Frisia. To the Anglo-Saxon translator it was naturally the furthest away from Wessex or Mercia, so "nearer" was altered into "further."

were set over the people. And whenever it was time of strife and war, they then came with lots to the chiefs, and whichever of them was marked out by the lot, they then chose general and leader, and him they followed and obeyed. And when the war and strife were at an end, all again were equal in power, and were chiefs. Then the bailiff entertained them, and promised to send them to his chief as they requested; but he kept them there some days with him. When the barbarians observed that they were of another religion, for they always sang their psalms and served God in holy prayer, daily offering sacrifice to God and celebrating mass—they had with them consecrated vessels and a consecrated table in place of an altar¹—then the heathen took counsel with one another and said: if they came to the chief and conversed with him they would turn him away from their gods and convert him to the new religion of Christ's faith; so, gradually, all their country would be obliged to forsake their old worship and adopt the new. Then suddenly they seized the men of God and killed them, slaying at once with the sword the white Heawald, but slowly putting to death and torturing in every limb the black Heawald. Now when they were slain, they threw their bodies out into the river Rhine [*Riine*]. Now when the chief heard how they had dealt with the men who wished to see and converse with him, he was very angry; he sent troops there, and told them to put all of that township [*tunscepe*] to death and burn the town.

'The aforesaid servants of Christ and priests suffered on the third of October.² Nor were heavenly marvels wanting at their martyrdom. For when they were slain and their bodies as we said before, had been cast by the heathen into the river, it happened that the bodies were carried against the current of the downward stream, through quite forty miles, to the place in which their acquaintances and companions were. Also a very great beam of heavenly light shone every night above the place where their bodies happened

¹ Bede says correctly "for an altar." Ecgbert's *Pontifical* (about A.D. 750) shows that an Anglo-Saxon bishop consecrated first the solid material of the altar, and then, separately and specially, the table [*tabula altaris*] on which the consecrated elements would lie. This "table" was movable. We still possess St. Cuthbert's *tabula*, about six inches square. It is shown in my *Venerable Bede* (1919), plate viii.

² Dr. Miller translates "the 11th of October," though his text gives "fifteen dege Nonarum Octobrium," in agreement with Bede's Latin text. I do not find *Iduum* in any text

to come ; and this also the heathen saw who had slain them. But then one of the martyrs appeared in a vision by night to one of their companions named Tilmon. He was a man of note of noble birth, also in the world at first an active follower of the king, and afterwards a monk. The vision told him he might find their bodies at the place where he saw the light shine from heaven to earth. And this also was fulfilled. Then at once their bodies were found and buried with the honours due to martyrs ; and the day of their passion and the day of the finding of their bodies are celebrated in those places with suitable honour. When Pippin,¹ King of the Franks, heard and learned of this, he sent a host and directed their bodies to be brought to him, and to be buried with great glory and distinction in the church of Cologne, the town on the Rhine. It is also said that at the place where they were slain a spring rose up which to this day flows and discharges abundance of water, at that same place, for the service and benefit of man.

‘ At once, in the very first days after the teachers came to Friesland and Wilbrord obtained the king’s leave to teach there, he desired forthwith to visit Rome, whose pope Sergius was at that time bishop of the apostolic see, desiring with his permission and blessing to begin and carry out the devout work of teaching the gospel to the nations. At the same time he wished to receive from him relics of the blessed apostles and martyrs of Christ, that when he overthrew idolatry and built and reared churches among the people whom he was teaching, he might have relics of the saints ready to place in them, and that he might consecrate suitable places to the honour of the saints, a separate place for each saint whose relics were contained there. There were many other matters also which he sought and desired either to learn there or to receive thence. And when he succeeded in all points according to his wish, he returned again to the teaching of the Word. At that time the brethren who were with him in Friesland engaged in the ministry of God’s Word, chose out of their number a man modest in character and of gentle disposition, named Swithberht, that he might be consecrated as their bishop. They sent him then to Britain, and he was consecrated at their request by the venerable Bishop Willferth, who was at that time an exile

¹ Alfred’s manuscript is not consistent in spelling. We have in this account Pipine and Pippin, Riine and Rine.

from his native country and serving in the land of Mercia, for at that time there was no bishop in Kent. Bishop Theodore had died, and his successor Berhtwald, having been sent over the sea for ordination, had not yet come to his episcopal seat. When Swithberht had received the episcopate, he returned again from Britain and after a short time departed to the people of the Bructeri, and by his teaching converted many of them to the way of truth. But then after a short time this people were conquered by the Old Saxons, and the believers, who had received the Word of God, were dispersed far and wide.

Swithberht, with some of his companions, visited Pipin, King of the Franks,¹ and through the interposition of Blithryth the queen the king gave them a dwelling on an island [*sic*] by the Rhine, which in their language is called and named *In Litore*,² on which he built a monastery which his heirs still possess. And he lived there for some time an ascetic life, and there ended his days. After his companions had taught the word of God for some years in Friesland, Pipin with the consent of all sent the Venerable Wilbrord to Pope Sergius at Rome, begging that he might be consecrated archbishop for the Frisian people. And the pope did as the king asked. Wilbrord was ordained in the church of the holy virgin and martyr St. Cecilia, on the day of her commemoration,³ and the pope surnamed him Clement. Immediately after his consecration, that is, at the end of fourteen days after he came to the city of Rome, the pope sent him back to his see. Pipin gave and assigned to him a bishop's seat in the famous town which is called Wiltaburg, an old word among this people; the Gauls call it Trajectum, we call it Ættreocum.⁴ Close by, the venerable bishop built a church, and preached and taught the word of God, concerning faith in Christ, far and wide, and recalled many from the heathen error of their life. And he built many monasteries and churches in that land, and after a time consecrated many others as bishops there, from among the number of the brethren who came with him or after him to preach the word of God, many of whom departed in the Lord. But Wilbrord, named by the pope Clement, enjoyed a long and venerable old age. He lived thirty-six years as bishop, and after

¹ With Bede, Pepin is always "duke of the Franks," not "king," and Blithryth is "his wife," not "queen."

² Kaiserwerth.

³ November 22.

⁴ Utrecht.

manifold struggles in heavenly warfare obtained as possession the meed of reward above.'

These last sentences are apt illustrations of a difficulty which frequently met the Anglo-Saxon translator of Bede. Reference is made to it in our first chapter, where Alfred solved it otherwise than as he solves it here. Was the translator to tell the reader in 890 that Willibrord was still living? The sentences stood thus in Bede: Wilbrord himself, surnamed Clement, is still living, venerable for his great age, having been thirty-six years a bishop; and now, after manifold conflicts of the heavenly warfare, he longs with all his heart for the recompense of the reward in heaven. Alfred, as we have seen, inserted the statement of his death.

It is evident that much might be said on the curious story that Swithberht was sent by the Irish mission to Wilfrith to be consecrated as their bishop. Its interest is enhanced by the story which follows, that Pipin sent Willibrord to Rome to be consecrated Archbishop of the Frisian people. It may be suggested, with some show of reason, that the ecclesiastical community at *In Litore* was established on the same basis as the Irish monasteries, with an abbat at its head and a bishop among its priest-monks, its first head combining the two offices. The statement that Swithberht's heirs still possessed the monastery in Bede's time, refers, no doubt, to the succession of abbats, not to any episcopal succession. The consecration of Willibrord took place five, or six, years after the commencement of his work in Frisia, and it may be that Pipin only sent him to be consecrated after Swithberht's death. On the other hand, "archbishop" may be held to imply the existence of a bishop.

Bede describes the abbats of Kaiserwerth as the heirs [*heredes*] of Swithberht, and Alfred renders *heredes* as *erfe-weardas*. In his *Lives of the Abbats* Bede has recorded a very strong condemnation of anything like hereditary succession to an abbacy, and there can be no doubt that the heirship mentioned in the case of Kaiserwerth means only a proper ecclesiastical succession. The case referred to as recorded in the *Lives* is that of Benedict (Biscop) of Wearmouth and Jarrow. When he was dying, there were three points on which he laid great stress in his practical injunctions to the monks. The third point was, the method of succession to the abbacy. Here he gave a suggestive hint of the evil of

hereditary succession, of which Bede wrote strongly to Bishop Egbert some years later. Benedict urged the brethren not to elect any one as abbat by reason of his birth. He would have no claims of next of kin. He was particularly anxious that they should not elect his own brother; he would rather his monastery became a wilderness than have this man to succeed him, for they all knew that he did not walk in the way of truth. Apparently he feared that a claim something like that of hereditary succession might be set up. That the fear was no visionary one may be seen from later ecclesiastical history, when benefices of various kinds, even bishoprics, were handed down from father to son; and the evils arising from this practice had no doubt much to do with the enforcement of celibacy among the clergy. In Biscop's own time the hereditary descent of an abbey was no unknown thing; thus the Abbess of Wetadun persuaded Bishop John of Hexham to cure her daughter after the flesh, whom she designed to make abbess after her. Not only would Biscop not have a hereditary abbat, he would not have an abbat brought in from another monastery. It may be remembered that the Abbat of Westminster who surrendered his abbey to Henry VIII was the first abbat for three hundred years who had not been a monk of Westminster. The duty of the brethren was, in accordance with the Rule of Abbat Benedict the Great, in accordance with their own statutes, to inquire carefully who of themselves was best fitted for the post, and, after due election, to have him confirmed as abbat by the bishop's benediction.

Alcuin used expressions in regard to Willibrord's father which, at first sight at least, appear to point to the claim of hereditary descent in this family. Alcuin (*Mon. Alc.*, 40) describes a small monastic foundation on Spurn Point, at the Humber estuary, of which Willibrord's father Uilgils was the head, "over which I, though unworthy, by the gift of God preside by legitimate succession." On the next page he is more full. The Northumbrian king and nobles provided Uilgils with certain little properties on the promontory, where he should build a church; here he collected a small body of God's servants; here he died, and from the tradition of his sanctity his descendants [*posteris*]
—he had a wife and family before he entered the ascetic religious life—"possess it to this day, of whom I, lowest in merit and rank, by legitimate successions received it to be governed." Alcuin's

record was addressed to Archbishop Beornrad, whom he describes as heir [*heres*] of the great ecclesiastical position and possessions which the Archbishop held.

Willibrord's own personal Calendar has very lately (1919) been published by the Henry Bradshaw Society. It has extraordinary interest for the students of the early church history of the English race. It has many entries of the days of English kings and ecclesiastical personages, and one long entry of extreme interest, evidently written by Willibrord's own hand, to the following effect :

"In the name of God Clement Willibrord in the 690th year from the Incarnation of Christ arrived from over sea in Francea and in the name of God in the 695th year from the Incarnation of the Lord—though unworthy—was ordained in Rome [*in romae*] bishop by the apostolic man the lord Sergius the pope and now in the name of God spending happily the 728th year from the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the name of God."

The date of consecration here given, 695, is in conflict with Bede's date, 696. We may fairly take it that Willibrord knew his own dates ; but it should be remembered that he was about seventy years old when he wrote the statement, that he was writing of an event of thirty-three years ago, and that men in those times had not the endless mass of occurrences in their lives, and had not the endless mass of publications and records, which help our men of seventy to make up their minds or their memories as to a question of thirty-two or thirty-three years ago. That the memory of men of those times was more fully trained than ours, and much less confused by the multiplicity of occurrences, is, of course, not to be questioned or disregarded.

Another conflict of statement relates to the church in which the consecration took place. Alcuin states that his relative was consecrated at St. Peter's ; Bede, at St. Cecilia (in Trastevere). Topographical and antiquarian considerations might suggest that both churches had something to do with the ceremonies of the day. If the question is a net question as between the two statements, we cannot hesitate to give it in favour of St. Cecilia. Her day, as we have seen, is November 22. In Willibrord's calendar for November four lines of very small writing are found at the right-hand margin, opposite the long entry quoted above. These four

lines are almost centrally opposite to April 21, the last syllable barely coming within the range of April 22. The words are, *ordinatio domni nostri clementis*.

Alcuin tells us (*Mon. Alc.*, 57) that when his relative was to be buried, the marble sarcophagus was found to be half a foot too short for the venerated body. But while the brethren were considering what could be done, by some marvellous means it was suddenly found to be a foot longer than it had been. It must always remain a puzzling fact that men of high insight and ability like Alcuin could record as facts material miracles of this character. There was so much simpler a way of explanation.

CHAPTER IX

Drythelm's Vision—The Revelation of St. Peter—The Vision of a sinful layman—The Vision of a sinful monk—Alfred's version of the story of Cedmon.

STUDENTS of *Bede's History* are aware that near the end of the whole work Bede has three very remarkable chapters, describing visions of the other world of punishment and reward. They are not in the ordinary sense history, and if Alfred had summarized them, or even omitted two out of three, we could have assigned reasonable cause for his action. But he gives them with complete fullness and great point. Here and there he inserts a word or two. Thus when the guide of his vision seemed to lead towards the rising of the summer sun, Alfred adds 'towards the north-east'; and a little later, when they turned towards the rising of the winter sun, he adds 'towards the south-east.' It must be noted, as a specially interesting fact but not in any way connected with Alfred, that the details of Drythelm's vision do not come from the book of the Revelation of St. John. There was in the early times of the church an apocryphal Revelation of St. Peter, which was in course of time completely lost. In recent investigations in Egypt, some portions of the lost Revelation have been found among collections of papyri of very early date. The Revelation of St. Peter, lost through all the centuries, is found to be the source of the most remarkable parts of Drythelm's vision, Bede's Latin version agreeing word for word with the Greek original of the papyri.

Drythelm had apparently died in the middle of the night. He came to himself in the morning. During the period of his trance, he saw the places of torment and of happiness. There were two degrees of torment. One was a broad valley full of men's souls. One side was the bitterest cold; the other the most terrible heat. The wretched souls were driven by the unbearable cold to fly across to the other side. Driven by the unbearable heat they flew back to the other side,

only to be driven out again as before. In these alternative agonies of torment their existence is passed.

'I began to think,' Alfred makes Drythelm say, 'that this was hell, but my guide answered my thought, This, quoth he, is not hell. Then suddenly I saw the parts before me begin to darken. The darkness became so dense that I could not see anything, only the appearance and the robes of my guide were bright and shining. Then there appeared before us many masses of black flames, rising up as out of a great pit, and again falling back and retiring into the pit. And while these masses of fire incessantly now shot up on high, now sank down into the abyss, I looked and saw that all the points of the ascending flames were full of men's spirits, now cast up on high, now slipping back into the abyss. Then suddenly I heard behind me a loud sound of violent and piteous weeping, as well as loud cackling laughter as if a rude mob were mocking captive foes. And I saw a crowd of accursed spirits dragging into the midst of the darkness five souls, lamenting and mourning, at which the evil spirits exulted and laughed. They were tonsured priest, lay man, woman.¹ The evil spirits sank down with them so deep in the abyss of burning flame that I could not distinguish the cries of the men from the laughter of the spirits. Then there came up from the place of torment dark spirits with fiery eyes and foul fire blowing from their mouth and nostrils, with fiery tongues in their hands, and they beset me and threatened to seize me with the tongues and hurl me into destruction, but they durst not touch me. Then as it were a bright shining star came to me, and the accursed spirits fled. It was my guide, who had left me to myself and now returned. We were soon carried out of the darkness, and he led me into the open light.

'There I saw before us a very great wall, of whose length on either hand, and height, no end was visible. Then I began to wonder why we were advancing to the wall, as I could not see in it any door, or any ascent on either hand. When we had come up to the wall, then at once, I know not how it was so ordered, we found ourselves above, on the top of the wall. There I saw a plain most spacious and most fair, all full of one sweetness of springing blossoms. And the wondrous sweetness of the strong scent drove away the

¹ Bede says one was a priest, one a layman, one a woman. Alfred does not appear to put it so definitely.

foulness of the dark furnace which had pervaded me. A light and a radiance so strong streamed throughout the whole place, that it seemed brighter than the brightness of the whole day or of the beams of the midday sun. In this plain were countless gatherings of men, white and fair, and many an assemblage of hosts rejoicing and exulting. And I thought perhaps this was the kingdom of heaven. But he answered my thought; Not this, quoth he, is the kingdom of heaven as thou countest and weenest.

'Then I saw before us a much more gracious light and brightness than I had seen before, in which I heard also voices most sweet that sang God's praise. And from that place there issued such sweetness of wondrous odour, that the sweetness I had before experienced and had thought so great, seemed but slight and moderate. And the light and brightness of the blossoming plain seemed but moderate in the delight of that place. When I thought we should have gone in, then suddenly my guide halted, and without delay led me back by the way we came, till we reached the joyous mansions of the white and fair spirits.

'Then quoth he to me, Knowest thou what all things be which thou hast seen? Answered I him, No, I know them not. Quoth he, The place where the valley was, terrible through boiling flame and strong cold, is the place where the souls of men are tried and cleansed who delayed to confess and atone for the sin and wickedness which they did, and yet at the last, in the very hour of death, fled to penitence and so passed away from the body; and because they did at the moment of death so do, at the day of doom all come to the kingdom of heaven. Many, too, are so helped by the prayers of the living, their alms and fastings, and above all by mass-song, that they are redeemed ere the day of doom. The pit which foamed up with flame and was so foul, was the mouth of hell's torment. Whatever man falls into it at any time, is never redeemed through all eternity.

'The place covered with blossoms, where thou sawest that fairest host shining with youth and taking delight, is the place in which those souls are received which depart from the body while doing good works, and yet are not so perfect as to be taken at once into the kingdom of heaven; all these at the day of doom enter upon the vision of Christ and the heavenly realm. Nearest to that kingdom is the

place where thou sawest the brightness of the great light and heardest the sound of pleasant song accompanying the odour of sweetness.'

The guide then informed him that if he earnestly maintained innocency of conduct character and words, he would pass, on death, to the last and sweetest place he had beheld.

As a contrast to this Northumbrian story, Alfred follows Bede (v. 13) with another story on similar lines.

'There was a man in Mercia, very acceptable to Coenred, the king who succeeded Æthelred on the throne, for his outward zeal in worldly things, but unacceptable to himself because of his inward carelessness in obeying God. The king often admonished him to confess and amend his life and give up sin and wickedness, lest by the sudden coming of death he should lose all time for amendment. He disregarded the words of salvation, promising when he was older to repent and confess his sins.'

At last he was taken seriously ill. The king came to comfort him. He refused to be comforted; it was hopeless. The king asked him if he was so sure it was too late. This is what he told the king :

'A little time before thou camest, there came to me in this house two young men, fair and bright, and sat down by me, one at my head, the other at my feet. Then one of them drew out a fair but very small book, and gave it to me to read. And when I looked on the book, I found written there all the good that ever I did. But the deeds were few and slight. They took the book from me and naught quoth they to me.

'Then came here suddenly a great host of accursed spirits, and they were of very dreadful shape and mien. And this house they compassed round without; and the greater part seated themselves within and filled the house. One there was of dark appearance and more terrible than the rest, who was the chief of them that sat; and he seemed to me to be the leader. He drew forth a book of terrible appearance and monstrous size and almost intolerable burden; this he gave to one of them and bade him bring it to me. Then as I read the book, I found in it, written clearly in black and terrible letters, all the sins I ever did, and not only in deed and word but in inmost thought, every one was written

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there. Then quoth the chief of the accursed spirits to the fair and bright men who sat by me, For what do ye sit here ? Answered they, Truth ye say ; take him and carry him away and fill up the measure of your damnation. Thus saying they passed out of my sight.

‘Then rose up two of the dreadful spirits, having hand-daggers in their hands, and they smote me, the one in the head, the other in the foot, and the wounds now with great pain and torment are pushing on together to the inner parts of my body, and when they meet I shall die, and the devils are waiting, ready to carry me off to hell. When the wretched man had spoken thus in despair, he died soon after in his sins.’

This story, Bede adds, as I learned it of the venerable Bishop Pechthelm, I have thought good to set forth plainly, for the salvation of such as shall read it or hear it.

In the next chapter (v. 14) Bede tells a similar story of a man he knew. Alfred gives it thus :

‘I myself knew a brother whom I should be glad never to have known. His name I could mention if it were of advantage. He was placed in a noble monastery, but he passed his life ignobly. He was often rebuked by the brethren and by the chief men of the place ; and though he refused to listen, he was borne with by all from need of his work, for he was specially trained in smithcraft. He was given to drunkenness and many other unlawfulnesses of a slack life. He would rather sit or lie day and night in his smithy than join in song and prayer in church or listen to the word of life and heavenly teaching among the other brethren. Thus it befell him as some are wont to say, He that will not with good will and humbleness enter the church shall of necessity against his will be led as damned into hell.

‘The man was stricken and afflicted with severe illness. It grew worse and worse, and brought him to his last day. He called the brethren in to him, and sorrowfully, as one of the damned, began to tell them that he saw hell open, and Satan the old enemy of man sunk in the depths of hell’s torment. And he saw there also Caiaphas the chief of the priests, with the others who slew the Lord Christ, given over to the avenging flames. In their neighbourhood, quoth he, woe is me, unhappy man, I see a place of eternal perdition prepared for me. The brethren earnestly encouraged him,

and warned him to repent while his soul was still in his body. He answered that there was not time. Having spoken thus he departed without the viaticum, and his body was buried at the farthest end of the monastery, and no man dared sing psalms or mass for him, nor even pray for him.

'Lo! with what distinctness God has divided the light from the darkness! The blessed Stephen saw the heavens opened, saw God's glory, and the Saviour standing at the right hand of God. This smith of dark spirit and dark deed saw hell's torment open, saw the damnation of the devil and his followers.

'This took place lately in the province of Bernicia and was celebrated far and wide. It stirred many to repent without delay, which thing also I desire from the reading of our account.'

A judicious writer has singled out Alfred's rendering of the story of Caedmon of Whitby (*H.E.* iv. 24) as a noble example of Early English prose. In a modern English dress Alfred's version reads as follows. The abbess is of course, Hilda; the monastery, Whitby. The story is iv. 25 in Alfred.

'In the monastery of this abbess there was a brother specially remarkable and distinguished by the divine grace. For he was wont to compose suitable songs, tending to religion and piety, so that whatever he had learned through scholars of the divine writings, he presently embellished in poetic compositions of the greatest sweetness and fervour, well brought out in the English language. And by his songs many men's minds were often fired to disregard the world and attach themselves to the heavenly life. And also many others after him in England began to compose pious songs; but none could do that like him. For he had not been taught of men or through man to acquire the art of song, but he had divine aid, and by God's gift he learned song-craft. And for this reason he never could compose anything frivolous, nor any idle poetry, but only that which tended to piety, and which it became his pious tongue to sing.

'The man had lived in the world till the time when he was of advanced age, and never had learned any poetry. And as he was often at a beer-drinking [*gebeorscipe*], when it was arranged, to promote mirth, that they should all in turn sing to the harp, whenever he saw the harp coming

near him, he arose for shame and went home to his house. Having done so on one occasion, he left the house of the beership and went out to the neat-fold, the charge of which had been committed to him that night. When in due time he rested his limbs and slept, there stood by him in a dream a man who saluted him and called to him by name: Cedmon! Sing me something! Then he answered and said: I cannot sing anything, and therefore I came out of the beership and retired hither, because I could sing naught. Then quoth he that spake with him: Yet you might sing! Then quoth he: What shall I sing? Sing to me the beginning of all things. Upon this answer he at once began to sing, in praise of God the Creator, verses and words he had never heard, the order of which this is:

Now should we praise the Warder of heaven's realm,
 Creator's might and His mind-counsel, Work of the glory-
 Father, how He wonders wrought, Author of all. The Lord
 the Eternal.

He first as a roof for the children of earth formed the holy heavens. Then the Eternal Lord, Warder of the race of men, Almighty Ruler, He fashioned the world and its soil for man.'

Alfred omits here a passage of Bede which bore hardly upon him as a translator: "This is the sense but not the order of the words as he sang them in his sleep; for verses cannot be literally translated out of one language into another without loss of beauty and loftiness, though never so well composed." Bede did not attempt to translate the Anglo-Saxon verses into Latin verse; he gives them in Latin prose. Alfred's seven short lines of verse have the true double *ictus*; they are said to be Mercian in dialect.

'Then he arose from his sleep, and he had firm in his memory all that when asleep he sang. And to these words he soon added on others in the same manner of song, worthy of God. Then he came in the morning to the town-reeve¹ who was his chief,² and told him what gift he had received; he at once took him to the abbess and made it known to her. She ordered all the most learned men and the students to be summoned, and bade him in their presence tell the dream and sing the song, that by the judgment of all it might be

¹ The manager of the farming operations which provided the food of the inmates of the abbey.

² Ealdormon.

determined what or whence this gift was. Then it seemed to all that a heavenly gift was given him from the Lord's self, as indeed it was. Then they set forth to him a holy story and a word of godly love, and bade him, if he could, turn it into melodious song. He accepted the task, went to his house, and returning in the morning, recited to them that which they had delivered to him, in excellent verse.

'Then the abbess joyfully welcomed the grace of God in the man, and enjoined upon him to leave the worldly life and begin the monastic life, and to that he readily agreed. And she admitted him with his goods¹ into that minster, and joined him with the congregation of God's servants, and directed that he should be taught the whole round of sacred history and narrative. And he retained in memory whatsoever he learned by hearing, and like a clean animal² he ruminated, and converted the whole into sweetest melody. And his song and his melody were so delightful to hear, that even his teachers wrote down the words from his mouth and learned them.³ He sang first of the creation of earth and man's beginning, and all the story of Genesis, which is the first book of Moses⁴; and about the outgoing of the people of Israel from the land of Egypt and their entry into the land of promise; and about many other stories of the books of the canon of Holy Writ⁵; and about the Incarnation of Christ, His Passion, His Ascension into heaven, the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the teaching of the Apostles. And he composed many a song about the day of judgment to come, and the terror of hell torment, and the sweetness of the kingdom of heaven.'

The story of Caedmon's death is touching in its simplicity. He felt that his time was coming, though there was no outward sign of any nearness of death. He asked to be taken to the house prepared for those who were in mortal sickness. They humoured their poet and took him to the house.

¹ *Susceptumque in monasterium cum omnibus suis fratrum cohorti associavit.* Alfred translates this more simply than Dr. Giles or Miss Sellar, who say, respectively, "she associated him to the rest of the brethren in her monastery," and, "having received him into the monastery, she and all her people admit him to the company of the brethren."

² Neat, a cow.

³ Made his masters in their turn his hearers. Bede.

⁴ Not in Bede.

⁵ Bede only says "histories of Holy Scripture."

‘He went to bed there and spoke cheerfully, and jested with those who were in the house. Then after midnight he asked them, Had they any housel there? They answered and said, What need have you of housel? Your forth-faring is not so near, now that thou speakest so cheerfully and brightly to us. Quoth he again, Bring to me housel. When he had it in his hand, he asked whether they all felt peaceably and cheerfully towards him, without any unkindness. They all answered and said that they had no unkindness, all were most friendly towards him, and begged him to feel kindly to them. He answered and said, My brethren, dear to me, I feel very friendly to you and to all God’s servants. And so he strengthened himself by the holy viaticum¹ and prepared his entry into the other life. Yet again he asked, how near it was to the hour when the brethren should get up and raise the song of praise to God and sing their early song. They answered that it was not far to that. He said, Good; let us await the hour. And he prayed, and signed himself with Christ’s cross, and laid down his head on his pillow,² and slept a little space; and so in stillness his life ended. And so it came to pass, that as with pure and simple heart and with tranquil devotion he served the Lord, so he also by a tranquil death left the earth, and appeared before God’s face. And the tongue which composed so many saving words in praise of the Creator, concluded its last words to His glory, as he crossed himself and commended his spirit into His hands.’

¹ Wegnest.

² A.S. bolstre.

BOETHIUS ON THE CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTORY

The personal history of Boethius—Dante's description of him—Sir Henry Slingsby's *Legacy to his Son*—The scheme of the *Consolation*—Metres and Prose—Earlier examples of this method—Translations into Early, Middle, Shakespearean, and Modern English—Theological treatises of Boethius—Definitions of a National Church by Boethius and Gregory the Great—Boethius the first of the schoolmen.

“THE Senator Boethius is the last of the Romans whom Cato or Tully could have acknowledged for their countryman.”

This is Gibbon's opening sentence of his description of the remarkable man who wrote the *Consolation of Philosophy*. On his name, Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, Gibbon comments in stately phrase. As a wealthy orphan, he inherited the patrimony and honours of the Anician family, a name ambitiously assumed by the kings and emperors of the age. The appellation of Manlius asserted his genuine or fabulous descent from a race of consuls and dictators, who had repulsed the Gauls from the capitol and sacrificed their sons to the discipline of the republic.

Born about A.D. 480, he was put to death in 524. He was a man of wide and varied knowledge. He translated, for the information of his Latin fellow-citizens, many of the most learned writings of Greek philosophers, the geometry of Euclid, the music of Pythagoras, the arithmetic of Nicomachus, the mechanics of Archimedes, the astronomy of Ptolemy, the theology of Plato, the logic of Aristotle with the commentary of Porphyry. He defended the orthodox creed of Christianity against the Arian, the Eutychian, and the Nestorian heretics.

In social and public life fortune favoured him highly and

continuously. He married the daughter of Symmachus who became the head of the Senate. His generosity, eloquence, humanity, were conspicuous. He received the titles of Consul and Patrician, and held the important post of Master of the Offices. His two sons, while yet of tender age, were chosen Consuls in one and the same year. We can see in the early part of the *Consolation* his own statement of the manner in which he conducted his public life, how he defended the oppressed, withstood corruption, took the risk of thwarting great and powerful men in their unworthy aims.

Theodoric, the King of the Ostrogoths, was Master of Rome and the West, King of Italy. There had been much to praise in his long rule. He was an Arian by faith, but not to any serious extent a persecutor; on the whole, broad-minded. He was an able ruler and had done much for the happiness and prosperity of the Italians. Near the end of his life unwise counsellors and unworthy officials drove him into courses and responsibilities which broke down his popularity. He suspected or discovered signs of an intention on the part of the Romans to call to their aid against him the Emperor of the East, Justin I, who had shortly before succeeded Anastasius I. Justin had issued edicts against the Arians, and this had provoked Theodoric to proceed against the Catholics. It was in this connexion that treasonable correspondence with the Eastern Court was suspected and charged. Boethius distinctly stated that there was a forgery of incriminating letters. A rather different complexion is placed upon the whole affair by the contemporary letters of Cassiodorus, and the problem of treason or complicity in treason is of high interest. But for our present purpose its discussion must be passed by. Boethius was condemned, probably without any formal trial at which he could set out his defence, and was executed. It is said that Theodoric contemplated the slaughter of the whole of the Roman Senate. He contented himself with beheading at Ravenna the head of the Senate, Boethius's father-in-law, Symmachus.

Again to quote Gibbon, chap. xxxix :

"While Boethius, oppressed with fetters, expected each moment the sentence or the stroke of death, he composed in the tower of Pavia the *Consolation of Philosophy*; a golden volume, not unworthy of the leisure of Plato or Tully, but which claims incomparable merit from the barbarism of the

times and the situation of the author. The celestial guide, whom he had so long invoked at Rome and Athens, now condescended to illumine his dungeon, to revive his courage, and to pour into his wounds her salutary balm. She taught him to compare his long prosperity and his recent distress, and to conceive new hopes from the inconstancy of Fortune. Reason had informed him of the precarious condition of her gifts; experience had satisfied him of their real value; he had enjoyed them without guilt; he might resign them without a sigh, and calmly disdain the impotent malice of his enemies, who had left him happiness since they had left him virtue. From the earth Boethius ascended to the heaven in search of the SUPREME GOOD; explored the metaphysical labyrinth of chance and destiny, of prescience and free will, of time and eternity; and generously attempted to reconcile the perfect attributes of the Deity with the apparent disorders of His moral and physical government. Such topics of consolation, so obvious, so vague, or so abstruse, are ineffectual to subdue the feelings of human nature. Yet the sense of misfortune may be diverted by the labour of thought; and the sage, who could artfully combine in the same work the various riches of philosophy, poetry, and eloquence, must already have possessed the intrepid calmness which he affected to seek. Suspense, the worst of evils, was at length determined by the ministers of death, who executed, and perhaps exceeded, the inhuman mandate of Theodoric."

It is a curious fact that we have a list of the literary, philosophical, and scientific labours and acquirements of Boethius, from the pen of Theodoric himself. The Burgundian king had asked Theodoric to send him a water-clock, and also an instrument of the nature of a sundial. That, at least, is the most likely meaning of Theodoric's phrase, "an instrument marked by the illumination of the sun." The letter is numbered i. 45, pp. 168-170 of Hodgkin's *Letters of Cassiodorus*, Henry Frowde, Amen Corner, 1886. "It will be a great gain to us," Theodoric proceeds, "that the Burgundians shall daily look upon something sent by us which will appear to them little short of miraculous. Exert yourself, therefore, Boethius,¹ to get this put in hand. You have thoroughly imbued yourself with Greek philosophy.

¹ The spelling of the name in the *Varia* is *Boethius*. The true Roman spelling was no doubt Boethius.

You have translated Pythagoras the musician, Ptolemy the astronomer, Nicomachus the arithmetician, Euclid the geometer, Plato the theologian, Aristotle the logician, and have given back Archimedes the mechanician to his Sicilian countrymen.¹ You know the whole science of mathematics, and the marvels wrought thereby."

Theodoric noted here the musical studies of Boethius. In letter ii. 40 (pp. 193, 194) he makes a special call upon the practical side of the musical knowledge of Boethius. Clovis the King of the Franks had asked Theodoric to send him a harper, and Theodoric wrote to Boethius, "We felt that in you lay our best chance of complying with his request, because you are such a lover of music yourself, and will be able to recommend to us the best man." The letter then passes off into a long disquisition on the nature of music, the five tones, etc. etc., and ends thus :

"We have indulged ourselves in a pleasant digression, because it is always agreeable to talk of learning with the learned ; but be sure to get us that Citharoedus, who will go forth like another Orpheus to charm the beast-like hearts of the Barbarians. You will thus both obey us and render yourself famous."

There are two accounts of his death. The one states that he was beheaded ; the other gives a horrible description of the tortures to which he was subjected in his last moments. A consideration of the probabilities gives preference to the simpler and gentler story. Early developments of historical stories do not usually proceed from the more to the less atrocious, as the historical sense of modern times tends to do.

Boethius was imprisoned and executed at Pavia. His body was buried in the monastery of S. Pietro in Ciel d'auro. Hence we have lines, already quoted in the Introduction to the present volume, in the Tenth Canto of Dante's *Paradiso* :

The saintly soul that shows
The world's deceitfulness, to all who hear him,
Is with the sight of all the good that is
Blest there. The limbs whence it was driven lie
Down in Cieldauro, and from martyrdom
And exile came it here.²

¹ They had ceased to speak Greek, and their language was now Latin.

² *Paradiso*, x. 124-129 :

Per vedere ogni ben Lentro vi gode
l'anima santa, che il mondo fallace
fa manifesto a chi di lei ben ode.

It seems worth while to quote here, as in some senses a parallel to the *Consolation*, with some phrases which are more than a parallel, a passage from a little book of high interest, *A Father's Legacy to his Sons*, written by Sir Henry Slingsby, of Scaglingthorpe, in the Tower of London immediately before his execution on June 8, 1658, for treason to the Commonwealth. He had been much troubled about the future of his sons and daughter, but had got all settled by entrusting them to the care of faithful trustees. "This quieted my thoughts, and brought me again to myself. And I found this calm and well-settled composure a precious princely structure. I found no billows dispassionately acting to endanger the passage of my late surcharged vessel. All appeared to me as in a calm sea : and as one in a safe harbour I began to recall to mind those divine contemplations which my late converse with secular occasions had so prejudicially estranged from me. I began to take a more serious view of what I had to my intellectual gain observed, and what I had in my own default neglected ; I took my mark as by a landskip, how the world was a shop of disguises and false faces. And I concluded upon my review of these, summing them up to their highest period, *How all things were vanity, save only to please God and to serve Him*. Make this your anchor-hold and you may sail safely. You shall manage your affections with that equal and discreet temper as nothing can possibly be acted by you to disparage you, or lay the least aspersion on your honour. It is not to be questioned but the high estimate that men set upon this world captives their affections, making them heavily leave what they did so heartily love. For what men enjoy with delight they must necessarily forgo with grief."

The scheme of the *Consolation* is skilful and attractive. Two personages occupy the stage throughout, Boethius and Philosophy. Both are vocal, and there is no monotony. A question from the one or a statement by the other gives variation. And the statements and the questions are such that the reader is naturally curious to see what the response is. There is another and a very unusual source of variety, as effective as it is unusual. A song is sung by one or the other, as the outcome of discussion on some point or as

Lo corpo ond' ella fu cacciata giace
giuso in Cieldauro, ed essa da martiro
e da esilio venne a questa pace.

the means of introducing matter for discussion. These songs are known by their Latin name, *Metres*. The discussions are all in prose, and they too are known by their Latin name, *Proses*. There are in all thirty-nine *Metres* and thirty-nine *Proses* in the *Consolation*. Yet another source of variety is found in the fact that Boethius was a great master of the art of producing poems in all kinds of metres, seldom in any recognized metre such as ordinary hexameters and pentameters. And besides varied poetic form there is varied poetic fancy in the *Metres*. As a literary performance the *Consolation* stands very high indeed. This literary character, combined as it is with deep philosophy and great dialectic force and agility, renders the book worthy of most careful attention at all times; and especially at a time like the present, when the world has been in throes of even greater magnitude than in the later stages of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.¹

Boethius has been singularly happy in his reception in England. He has fallen into the hands of three personages, all of whom would certainly be written down early, and high up, in any list, however short, of the greatest men and women of England. He has been translated into Anglo-Saxon by King Alfred, into Middle English by Chaucer, into Shakspearean English by Queen Elizabeth.

Of modern English translations of the Latin Boethius, two-very satisfactory publications must be mentioned. Messrs. George Routledge and Sons published in 1897, in the New Universal Library, a scholarly translation of the *Consolation*, the *Metres* rendered accurately into very pleasing English verse. The publishers have kindly allowed use to be made of this edition for the purpose of the present account.

¹ Capella (Martianus), towards the close of the fifth century, wrote a voluminous work, in nine books, in a medley of prose and various kinds of verse.

Some of the medleys of Petronius Arbiter, prose writings interspersed with numerous pieces of poetry, are so obscene that no philosopher could have been tempted to copy them in outward form. They were certainly in existence long before the time of Boethius. Varro, a contemporary of Cicero, "the most learned" and "the most voluminous" of Romans, wrote his *Satires* in various forms of poetic metre, interspersed with prose. They were of the nature of dialogues. This is a far more likely origin for the form of Boethius's *De Consolatione* than anything written by Petronius.

The very great and widespread popularity of the *De Consolatione* in the Middle Ages led to many examples of the effective alternation of prose and verse. Itinerant minstrels adopted this method in their narratives of love and adventure, as in the song-story of Aucassin and Nicolette. It is not unusual in Arab literature where the intercalated verse is usually of a moral and reflective character. It is said that the savage tribes of Africa employ this device to give variety to their recitations.

The skilful translator is Mr. H. R. James, of Christ Church, Oxford.

More recently still, Mr. William Heinemann has published, in the Loeb Classical Library, a complete edition of Boethius, in Latin and English, under the editorship of Dr. H. F. Stewart, of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Dr. E. K. Rand, of Harvard. Dr. Stewart's name has long been honourably connected with the study of Boethius. So long ago as 1888 he won the Hulsean Prize at Cambridge by an essay on Boethius. The Essay was developed, and was published in 1891; it remains our standard work on the subject; and it should be studied by any one who desires to know Boethius as a philosopher or as a man. Permission to use the translations, alike the very pretty verse and the careful prose, has been kindly given by Dr. Stewart and Mr. Heinemann. This important volume contains Boethius *On the Trinity* (two treatises); *On the Catholic Faith*; *Against Eutyches and Nestorius*; and the *De Consolatione*. In each case the Latin text and an English rendering are given. It is very tempting to compare the *Consolation* with the theological treatises, here published for the first time in an English dress. The English translation of the *Consolation* is taken from an early seventeenth-century translation by "L. T.," a very accurate translation by one who wrote in Queen Elizabeth's reign. The translation is dedicated to the dowager Countess of Dorset, widow of Thomas Sackville. She was Cicely Baker. The Earl died suddenly at the Council table at Whitehall, April 19, 1608, and his widow died October 1, 1615. Between those dates the dedication must have been written. It is a really remarkable fact that the modern English version of two of King Alfred's books, the *Consolation* and the *Dialogues*, should come almost without any change from translations of the late Elizabethan age, dedicated the one to this Countess of Dorset, the other to Anne of Denmark. The dates of dedication come curiously close. The dedication to Queen Anne was dated by "P. W.," the translator, January 1, 1608. "L. T." may have written his dedication to the widowed Countess six months after that.

The inclusion of the theological treatises, attributed to the Senator Boethius, in the same volume with the *Consolation*, indicates clearly the view of the editors that Boethius was a Christian. This has been freely questioned. The recognition of God as the Supreme Good is unmistakable

throughout the work ; but it would be very difficult, to say the least, to find a passage in the *Consolation* of which it could be said positively that the man who wrote it must have been a Christian. It seems, on the whole, probable that the Christian Philosopher Boethius desired to leave behind him a scheme of consolation which should help the many men of his time who held themselves determinedly aloof from the acceptance of Christianity ; while it should be so phrased that at every point the earnest Christian could accept its aid, and enhance its force by the divine consolations of his spiritual faith. It seems clear that Alfred took it so. He frequently slips in a few words which give the Christian point to an argument of Philosophy.

Boethius's treatise on the Catholic Faith, *de Fide Catholica*, concludes with a definition of the Catholic Church, and a statement of the Christian's hope and expectation. The definition of the Catholic Church is very much what might have been expected from a Christian in a very prominent public position in the city of Rome in the days of Felix III, Anastasius II, and Hormisdas, Bishops of Rome. Dr. Stewart and Dr. Rand render it into English as follows :

"The Catholic Church, then, spread throughout the world, is known by three particular marks : whatever is believed and taught in it has the authority of the Scriptures, or of universal tradition, or at least of its own and proper usage.¹ And this authority is binding on the whole Church, as is also the universal tradition of the Fathers, while each separate church exists and is governed by its private constitution and its proper rites according to difference of locality and the good judgment of each."

It may be noted that Gregory the Great laid down precisely that rule for the Church of the English, eighty years after the death of Boethius. Whatever rites were found in any Church, whether Roman or Gallican, which seemed suited for the English, were to be put together by Augustine and established as the custom of the *Ecclesia Anglorum*. That is the true position of National Churches.

Boethius's statement of the hope and expectation of the Christian is finely and clearly expressed :

"All that the faithful now expect is that the end of the world will come ; that all corruptible things shall pass away ; that men shall rise for future judgment ; that each shall receive

¹ *Aut certe propria et particularis instructio.*

reward according to his deserts, and abide in the lot assigned to him to eternity ; and the sole reward of bliss will be the contemplation of the Almighty—so far as the creature may look on the Creator—to the end that the number of the angels may be restored from these, and the city on high may be filled where the King is the Virgin's Son, where will be everlasting joy, delight, food, work, and praise unending of the Creator."

Dr. Stewart, having regard to the manner in which Boethius handles the difficult subjects with which these treatises deal, classes him as the "first of the schoolmen."

The *Consolation* does not appear to be in itself very consolatory. It is throughout interesting ; but its interest is in the main intellectual and literary. As such, it would no doubt have a soothing effect upon a troubled and anxious mind ; but that is not in a strict sense consoling.

As to philosophy, it is fortunately not a part of the present writer's purpose to enter, all unprepared, upon the task of criticizing or discussing the position of the author as a philosopher. To the ordinary reader, there seems to be a lack of conclusiveness, and some want of clearness, about the treatise as a whole ; probably the fault of the ordinary reader. In the more argumentative parts, it is sometimes difficult to understand to what grade of intelligence the mind with whom he argues is supposed by Boethius to belong. But for all that, the book filled an important and a valuable place alike in the philosophical and in the religious minds of the Middle Ages ; and even on that account alone it would deserve our best attention. But the present essay has this further claim, that we can in honesty say that of all the presentments of the treatise, made to those centuries or generations, in lectures and otherwise, the Anglo-Saxon world had the best presentment of our author's mind.

CHAPTER II

THE ANGLO-SAXON VERSION

The Anglo-Saxon version of the *De Consolatione*—Two manuscripts—A prose and a poetic rendering of the Metres in Anglo-Saxon—Alfred's love of vernacular song—Was he the author of the Lays?—The many insertions of explanatory and additional matter—Masterful boldness of editing—Editions of Alfred's Boethius by Mr. Fox and Dr. Sedgefield.

WE must now turn to our special subject, the Anglo-Saxon version of the *De Consolatione*.

Considering the popularity of Boethius's treatise on the *Consolation of Philosophy*, it is remarkable that we have only one early manuscript of King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon rendering, and one other manuscript some two hundred years later. There is in existence also half a leaf of another manuscript, which had been used as a binding.

The first of these Anglo-Saxon manuscripts is of the tenth century. Sweet ascribes it to the beginning of the century. It was much injured in the fire which did such great damage to the Cotton Library in 1731. Wanley, who saw it before it was injured, referred it to King Alfred's lifetime, or the period immediately following his death. Dr. Sedgefield informs us that Sir Edward Maunde Thompson believes it to have been written shortly after the middle of the tenth century, about A.D. 960-970. It is called "C" in the discussions on the MSS. This manuscript is in the British Museum, Otho A. vi, bound up with a Latin Life of Edward the Confessor. It contains the Anglo-Saxon prose translation of the Latin prose, and an alliterative Anglo-Saxon rendering of the Latin *metra* or *carmina*, the Lays. The later manuscript is in the Bodleian Library, and is noted as "B" in the discussions. The third fragment was discovered in 1886 by Professor Napier of Oxford; it is in the Bodleian, and is noted as "N."

There is a remarkable difference between the earlier manuscript, C, and the later, B. In C the Metres [*Carmina*], Lays, are in Anglo-Saxon verse; in B they are in Anglo-

Saxon prose. On the face of it, we might fairly suppose that the Anglo-Saxon verse was part of Alfred's translation of the *Consolation*. The verse is alliterative, rough, in short lines, reminding us of the outburst of song of this character which we find in Alfred's preface to the *Pastoral Care*, when he speaks of Gregory the Great and his mission to the English. Alfred's skill with the harp is proverbial, and in concert with the harp he would chant just such pointed lines as these of the *Lays*, or *Metres*, with a twofold *ictus* in each short line. And we know in how great esteem he held the practice of making instruction acceptable by putting it in poetic form. William of Malmesbury tells us of Alfred's praise of his collateral ancestor Aldhelm on this score. "Being," William says of Aldhelm, "so highly learned, he yet did not neglect the songs of his native tongue; so sure is this, that on the testimony of Alfred's book which I have mentioned before, no one had been equal to him at any time in English poetry, in composing as well as singing or reciting it appropriately. At last, Alfred mentions that a popular song, still sung in the streets, was composed by Aldhelm, adding the reason why such a man should thus be frivolous. The people at that time being half-barbarians, and caring very little about sermons in church, used to go off home as soon as mass had been sung. For this reason the holy man would stand on the bridge which connects the town with the country, and would meet them on their way home, like one whose profession is the art of singing. Having done so more than once, he obtained the favour of the people, who flocked round him. Mixing by this device by and by the words of holy Scripture with his playful ditty, he led the people back to a proper life. For if he had preferred to act severely and by excommunication, he would never have gained anything by it."

Thus we might naturally suppose that a bardic Anglo-Saxon, as Alfred certainly was, would render pointed Latin verse into pointed Anglo-Saxon verse. But the prose version of the *Metres* is regarded as the earlier; it may well be by only a few years, and it may well be that both renderings were Alfred's. In the prose version, many of the *Metres* are mainly or entirely omitted, as 3, 4, 7, of Book I; 1 and 2 of Book II; 7 of Book IV; 1, 3, 4, of Book V. From this version, and not from the Latin, the Anglo-Saxon *Carmina*, the *Lays*, were constructed, for exactly these omitted *Metres*

do not appear in the Lays. Thus it seems clear that the Lays were posterior to the prose version ; and this is abundantly confirmed by an examination of the accretions common to the Anglo-Saxon prose Metres and the Lays.

Whether the development of the Anglo-Saxon prose Metres into the Lays was done by Alfred himself is quite another question. The evidence adduced in proof of his remarkable devotion to English verse goes far to make it at least probable that it was. Alfred's Preface furthers this view.

The critics naturally disagree on the question. The matter must be regarded as not settled one way or the other. Some of the objections no doubt have force ; but it may be hoped that if and when it is settled, the great King will be acclaimed the great Poet.

Another controversy touches the substance of Alfred's *Boethius*. A great deal of Alfred's book does not appear in the original Latin. There are endless small insertions, which may be regarded as mere notes, or passing explanations or enrichments ; but there are, besides, long passages of additional matter. It may well have been that before Alfred's time Boethius's treatise had been largely glossed by Latin scholars, especially in cases where a Christian scholar would naturally introduce a parallel or an enhancement from the Christian point of view. But many of the additions we find in Alfred's version are of too simple and naïve a character to be thus explained. Of the more philosophical and the more Christian glosses, it has been understood that many are to be found in a tenth-century Latin manuscript of Boethius, now at Maihingen, and in a tenth- or eleventh-century Latin manuscript at Munich. The evidence of the former of these manuscripts is examined in an Appendix at the end of this book.

Putting all external influences at their highest, there remains a large amount of additional matter in Alfred's version which must be attributed to the King himself, quite possibly as the result of those discussions on things serious and practical which he loved to hold with Asser and with others of his learned and helpful friends. The comparative simplicity of Alfred's version finds some explanation in William of Malmesbury's *Deeds of the Kings*, ii. 4, where he tells us that Bishop Asser explained to the King the meaning of the writings of Boethius, on the Consolation of Philosophy,

in clearer terms, and the King himself then translated the book into the English language.

Besides this large amount of alteration, Alfred completely alters the shape of the book. Boethius wrote five books, with thirty-nine Metres and thirty-nine Proses. Alfred makes it one book, with forty-two chapters. His greatest changes are at the beginning. We shall therefore give the whole of the opening part of Boethius, down to the fifth Metre, as it stands in the Latin original, and then proceed to give the whole of the corresponding part of Alfred's version, with the prose translation of the Metres. It will be seen how very much Alfred cuts down the original; while, on the other hand, he writes a Preface and an Historical Introduction, neither of which appears in the Latin. In these two important passages we have the King himself speaking to us out of his own mind. Curiously enough, these two pieces of prose are also put into alliterative Anglo-Saxon verse, as the Metres are, in the C manuscript.

So long ago as 1864 the Reverend Samuel Fox published in Bohn's Antiquarian Library the Anglo-Saxon text of Alfred's *Boethius*, with an English translation. Mr. Fox worked upon the earlier edition of Mr. Cardale, and produced a very helpful volume. This has recently (1909) been reprinted by Messrs. George Bell and Sons, who have kindly allowed their valuable edition to be used for the purpose of this present book. It contains all the Lays, both prose and verse, with notes and glossary.

In 1899 the Oxford University Press published a very complete edition of the Anglo-Saxon text, with all the Lays, prose and verse, and with critical notes and glossary. This was followed in 1900 by a rendering of King Alfred's version into modern English, with a valuable Introduction, again from the Oxford University Press. The Prelude, Introduction, and Lays, are given in prose in the body of the book; in alliterative modern English, as verse, at the end. For these books we are indebted to Dr. Walter John Sedgefield, of Christ's College, Cambridge. Permission to make use of them has been kindly given by the Oxford Press and by Dr. Sedgefield. For our present purpose their value is beyond count; our treatise could not have been written without them. Dr. Sedgefield prints in italics the rendering of all the large part of Alfred's work which is not found in the Latin. This has saved much time in the preparation of the

present volume. In some cases it is very difficult to decide that Alfred's departure from the Latin is a departure in substance and is not merely a very free and expanded translation. In quoting Dr. Sedgefield's very valuable rendering of the Lays, his exact rendering is given. Except where Mr. Fox is specially mentioned, the bulk of Alfred's rendering of the prose of Boethius is taken from Dr. Sedgefield.

For convenience of reference it may be noted that Book I of *Boethius* is represented by Chapters i–vi of Alfred's version, Book II by Chapters vii–xxi, Book III by Chapters xxii–xxxv, Book IV by Chapters xxxvi–xl (one-half), and Book V by Chapter xl (the other half) to xlii.

N.B. King Alfred's comments and additions are indicated by single inverted commas.

CHAPTER III

OTHER TRANSLATORS.

Other translators—Chaucer—The Romaunt of the Rose—Chaucer's middle period, 1372-1386—The name *Boece*—Chaucer's glosses—Queen Elizabeth's Englishing—Early English Texts edition—The Queen's many translations—The speed of her work.

WITH Alfred's Anglo-Saxon version of the *Consolation* it is natural to compare the Middle English rendering by Chaucer and the transition English by Queen Elizabeth. But the comparison, so far as it is close, is only literary. Chaucer and Elizabeth were translators, and that was all. They took the Latin text and kept to it, as translators should. Alfred dealt as he pleased with the Latin texts in substance and in form.

There are curious contrasts among the three in regard to the Metres. One of the manuscripts of Alfred's version, as we have seen, renders the Metres in prose, the other in verse. The master-poet Chaucer renders them in prose; the Queen, rather prosily in verse.

Precisely why Chaucer should set himself to translate this long treatise of Boethius does not appear to be clear. The late Professor Skeat, in preparing the fine Clarendon Press Edition of Chaucer (1894), makes a suggestion. He thinks that Chaucer's attention may have been called to the *Consolation*, or at least to the idea of translating it, by his early study of the *Roman de la Rose*, the Romaunt of the Rose, where, in lines 5052-6 Jean de Meux wrote :

Ce puet l'en des clers enquerre
Qui *Boïce de Confort* lisent,
Et les sentences qui là gisent,
Dont grans biens as gens laiz feroit
Qui bien le lor translateroit.

These lines Professor Skeat kindly *translateroit* thus, for the benefit of the unlearned folk : " This can be easily ascertained from the learned men who read Boece on the Conso-

lation of Philosophy, and the opinions which are found therein ; as to which, any one who would well translate it for them would confer much benefit on the unlearned folk." We may remind ourselves that Chaucer himself translated the *Roman de la Rose* in his earliest period, and that his translation is unfortunately lost. The *Boethius* comes in his middle period, after his visit to Italy and while he was decidedly under Italian influence, to which we may perhaps attribute his knowledge of Boethius, rather than to the mention of the book in the *Roman*. His middle period, the period of the direct influence of Dante and Boccaccio, covered the years 1372-86. Within that period Dr. Skeat places the *Boethius*, centrally but early. A close connexion is easily seen to exist between the prose translation of Boece and the metrical *Troilus and Criseyde*. The prose work would appear to have been put in hand first, and the poetry was probably in hand before the Boece was finished. The lines to Adam :

Adam scriveyn, if ever it thee befall
Boece or Troilus to wryten newe,

must, Dr. Skeat says perhaps not very conclusively, have been written when the *Troilus* was finished, and that date may be put between 1381 and 1383. The two works may be assigned to the period 1377-83. Chaucer's *House of Fame* must have followed close upon the *Troilus* ; and its date is practically sure, 1383-4.

The form *Boece*, it may be mentioned in passing, is due to an alternative spelling of the Latin, *Boetius*. In a manuscript in the British Museum, containing a verse translation of the whole book by John Walton, Canon and Chaplain of Oseney, dated in 1410, the Latin title is given as *Liber Boecii de Consolatione Philosophie*. From that time this was a usual form.¹

The most marked feature of Chaucer's translation is the very large number of explanations and glosses which he inserts. There is a fine manuscript of the *De Consolatione* in the Cambridge University Library, Camb. Ii. 3, 21. It contains the Latin text and Chaucer's translation, Chapter i

¹ There was a Boetius among the Irish Saints who were disciples or companions of St. Fursey and his brothers ; see page 216. Another Irish Boetius gave its specific name to the great monastery which is now Monasterboice (Mainister-Buithe), county Louth. Mr. Skene identifies Carbuiddo, in Angus, with the Castrum which Nectan the King of the Picts gave to this Boetius in recognition of a miracle wrought in the Castrum.

of Chaucer following Chapter i of Boethius, and so on alternately through the whole book. The Latin text abounds with side-notes and glosses, and these are the origin of a large proportion of Chaucer's many insertions of explanation or comment. Among them are the typical examples which follow.

In Boethius's defence of his public actions, which we shall omit in Prose 4 of Book I, he speaks of preventing a forced sale of corn at high price; and on another occasion he prevented coemption of corn. In the former case Chaucer gives a Glossa: "Whan that Theodoric, the King of Gothes, in a dere yere, hadde hise gernerres ful of corn, and comaunded that no man ne sholde byen no corn til his corn were sold, and that at a grevous dere prys, Boece withstood that ordinance, and over-com it, knowing al this the king himself." In the second case we have this Glossa: "Coempcioun, that is to seyn, comune achat, or bying to-gidere, that were establissed up-on the poeple by swiche a manere imposicioun, as who-so boughte a busshel corn, he moste yeve the king the fite part."

Again from Prose 4. Chaucer translates fairly closely thus: The gessinge and the iugement of moche folk ne looken no-thing to the desertes of thinges, but only to the aventure of fortune. Glose: "As thus; that yif a wight have prosperitee, he is a good man and worthy to han that prosperitee; and who-so hath adversitee, he is a wikked man, and god hath forsake him, and he is worthy to han that adversitee. This is the opinioun of some folk."

In Prose 1 of Book II: She (fortune) hath forsaken thee, forsothe; the whiche that never man may ben siker that she ne shal forsake him. Glose: "But natheless some bokes han the text thus: Forsothe, she hath forsaken thee, ne ther nis no man siker that she ne hath nat forsaken."

What other thing biwailen the crynges of tragedies but only the dedes of Fortune. Glose: "Tragedie is to seyn, a ditee of a prosperitee for a tyme, that endeth in wrecchednesse."

Nonne adolescentulus δύο τοὺς πίθους τὸν μὲν ἕνα κακῶν τὸν δὲ ἕτερον καλῶν in Jovis limine jacere didicisti? Learnedst not thou in Greke, whan thou were yonge, that in the entree, or in the celere of Jupiter, ther ben couched two tonnes, that on is ful of good, that other is ful of harm?

We may wonder whether to Chaucer the assumption

that a man had been taught Greek as a boy was quite natural.

In Metre 5 of Book II :

Nec Bacchica munera norat
Liquido confundere melle,
Nec lucida vellera Serum
Tyrio miscere veneno.

They ne coude nat medly the yifte of Bacchus to the clere honey ; that is to seyn, they coude make no piment nor clarree ; ne they coude nat medle the brighte fleeces of the contree of Seriens with the venim of Tyrie ; “ that is to seyn, they coude nat deyen whyte fleeces of Serien contree with the blode of a maner shelfissche that men finden in Tyrie, with whiche blode men deyen purpur.”

Heu, quis primus fuit ille
Auri qui pondera tecti,
Gemmasque latere volentes
Preciosa pericula fodit.

Allas ! what was he that first dalf up the gobetes or the weightes of gold covered under erthe, and the precious stones that wolden han ben hid ? He dalf up precious perils. “ That is to seyen, that he that hem first up dalf, he dalf up a precious peril ; for-why, for the preciousnesse of swiche thinge, hath many man ben in peril.”

In Prose 6 of Book II :

For what thing is, that a man may don to another man, that he ne may receyven the same thing of othere folk in him-self ; “ or thus, what may a man don to folk, that folk ne may don him the same ? ”

Queen Elizabeth's Englishing

The Early English Text Society published in 1899 a book of remarkable interest. This was Queen Elizabeth's Englishing of Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, Original Series 113 ; Kegan Paul and Co. It was excellently edited from the unique manuscript, partly in the Queen's own handwriting, in the Record Office, London, by Miss Caroline Pemberton. Under that lady's competent hands the story of the Queen's work reaches a very high point of instruction and interest. The book includes the Queen's Englishing of Plutarch's *De Curiositate* and of a part of Horace's *De Arte*

Poetica. The Boethius was Englished by the Queen in 1593, the Plutarch and Horace in 1598. At these dates the Queen's age was sixty and sixty-five, she was in the thirty-fifth and fortieth years of her reign, and she was within ten years and five of her death. Her active work as Queen had almost ceased even at the earlier of the two dates; her large work for the nation was completed in 1588, with the destruction of the Armada. Her personal interests had miscarried with the marriage of Essex in 1590. In 1592 she had committed Raleigh to the Tower for his relations with Elizabeth Throgmorton, and on his marriage she had forbidden him the Court. In 1593 she turned to the *Consolation* of Boethius and translated it into English. In that same year Essex wrote to Bacon that it would be for the Queen's honour if those excellent translations of hers might be known to those who could judge of them.

We learn from Camden that she translated Sallust's *Jugurthine War*. She translated also portions of Seneca's and Cicero's *Letters*, and translated into Latin a Play of Euripides and two Orations of Isocrates. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1742, Miscellaneous Correspondence, No. 2, her translation into English of a Dialogue of Xenophon is given at length.

In the *History of the English People*, by J. R. Green, we read that

"Elizabeth studied every morning the Greek Testament, and followed this by the tragedies of Sophocles, or orations of Demosthenes. The new literature that was springing up around her found constant welcome in her court. She was familiar with Ariosto and Tasso. She spoke Italian and French as fluently as her mother tongue.

"She made many translations. From the French, the *Meditations* of the Queen of Navarre; from the Greek, a Play of Euripides, two Orations of Isocrates, a Dialogue of Xenophon; from the Latin, Sallust's *Jugurthine War*, Horace's *De Arte Poetica*, Plutarch's *De Curiositate*."

Most of the Metres of Boethius are in the Queen's own handwriting. Most of the Proses she dictated to a secretary, and these she corrected in her own handwriting. The secretary was Thomas Windebank, Clerk of the Signet in 1568 and Clerk of the Privy Seal in 1598.

The spelling is decidedly more archaic than is the spelling—for instance—of Shakspeare's *Love's Labour Lost* as published

in 1598, even after we have discounted the difference by allowing for carelessness and extreme haste. With regard to haste, we have some remarkable statements of the amount of time the Queen spent on these works of translation. It is evident that she was proud of the swiftness of her work; and after making full allowance for the subservience of her courtiers, it seems probable that her swiftness made a real impression upon them. Her rendering of Metre 7, Book I, which is given on p. 306, is a pattern of nimbleness and cleverness; in one short line after another she hits off the exact force of the Latin, frequently in even fewer syllables than the specially concise original. All through her work on Boethius we cannot but realize that we are privileged to feel the grasp of a thoroughly virile and swift mind.

Three contemporary computations of the time spent on the translations have been preserved. The first was addressed to the Queen herself.

"The Computation of the dayes and houres in which your Majestie began and finished the translation of *Boethius*.

"Your Majestie began your translation of *Boethius* the tenth day of October, 1593, and ended it the fifth of November then next Immediatly following, which were fiue and twenty days in all.

"Out of which XXV dayes are to be taken fowre Sondayes, three other holly-dayes, and six dayes on which your Majestie ryd abroad to take the ayre, and on those dayes did forbear to translate, amounting together to thirtene dayes,

"Which xiiij being deducted from xxv, remaynith then but twelue dayes.

"And then accompting twoo houres only, bestowed euery day one with another in the translating, the computation fallith out, That in fowre and twenty houres your Majestie began and endid your translation."

The other accounts given by Miss Pemberton put it at xxvi or xxvii hours or thereabouts. The three accounts agree that the work was done at Windsor.

Miss Pemberton copied as rapidly as she could one page of the specified length, and it occupied her just half an hour. Thus the Queen was credited by her contemporary annotators with translating Latin prose and difficult Latin poetry nearly twice as rapidly as a modern scribe could write the words down.

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This book of Queen Elizabeth's Englishings ought to be more generally known than it is.

The authorities of the Early English Text Society have most kindly given full permission to make use of this, as of others of their invaluable publications.

CHAPTER IV

BOOK I, METRES 1-6 AND PROSES 1-5

Mournful song of Boethius—Philosophy enters—Her appearance—She drives out the Muses of Poesy—She sings a song of sympathy—And proceeds to comfort him—Dante and Beatrice—Another song opens his eyes and his melancholy passes away—A noble song in praise of a man firm under trouble follows—Philosophy bids Boethius tell her the causes of his trouble—He does so, and then bursts into song addressed to the builder of the universe—She argues his case, and proposes to apply gentle treatment.

THE main subject of this present account is King Alfred's version of *Boethius* ; but Chaucer and Queen Elizabeth must have place on the stage. To bring this about, without unduly exaggerating their share in our consideration, it will be well to let them give examples of their skill by providing the English of one and another of the Metres and Proses. Boethius himself, too, must appear in his own dress on our page. We shall therefore in a few instances give the original Latin of the Metres, partly for its own poetic sake, partly that we may see how near the several units of our galaxy of translators come to their great original.

This method of treatment will have the effect of crowding our earliest pages with long passages for the purpose of comparison. But after careful consideration this seems a better course than the alternative method of relegating the materials for comparison to an Introduction. Readers who work through these earliest pages will get completely into the spirit of Boethius ; and readers who do not care to study the comparison of the author and his several translators need only read the passages printed in modern English. The various printings of the Latin diphthongs are mainly due to quotations from various texts. Chaucer and Queen Elizabeth will not appear in the later pages.

It will be well to have before your mind the skeleton of the Consolation which Philosophy administers in the long-drawn-out course of this treatise. It addresses itself to five main points : Inconstancy of Fortune, Chance and Destiny,

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Foreknowledge and Free Will, Time and Eternity, Disorders in the Moral and Material World.

We shall take first the opening part of the work of Boethius as he left it, giving the Metres and the substance of the Proses of this early part in modern English, along with renderings of the Metres by Chaucer and Queen Elizabeth. This will cover the first six Metres and the first five Proses of the First Book.

We shall then take the whole of that part of King Alfred's version which corresponds to these six Metres and five Proses, prefacing it with the King's deeply interesting proem and historical introduction. It will be seen with how very free a hand the King deals with his chosen author's work.

To begin, then, with the first Metre. Boethius is in prison, in fetters, alone. He is awaiting death. He has been highly successful, deeply philosophical. Success has gone, philosophy has no consolation; he is mournful, melancholy. Poesy can at least occupy his mind for a time. He puts the tears of his soul into verse. Without preface or prelude of any kind he gives the following song, one of the rare cases in which the song is not assigned to Philosophy:

i. m. i. Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi,
 Flebilis, heu, moestos cogor inire modos.
 Ecce mihi lacerae dictant scribenda Camenae
 Et veris elegi fletibus ora rigant.
 Has saltem nullus potuit pervincere terror
 Ne nostrum comites prosequerentur iter.
 Gloria felicitis olim viridisque juventae
 Solantur moesti nunc mea fata senis.
 Venit enim properata malis inopina senectus
 Et dolor aetatem jussit inesse suam.
 Intempestivi funduntur vertice cani,
 Et tremit effoeto corpore laxa cutis.
 Mors hominum felix, quae se nec dulcibus annis
 Inserit, et moestis saepe vocata venit.
 Eheu! quam surda miseros avertitur aure,
 Et flentes oculos claudere saeva negat.
 Dum levibus malefida bonis fortuna faveret,
 Paene caput tristis meraserat hora meum.
 Nunc quia fallacem mutavit nubila vultum,
 Protrahit ingratas impia vita moras.
 Quid me felicem toties jactastis amici?
 Qui cecidit, stabili non erat ille gradu.

Dr. Stewart and Dr. Rand shall render this into English verse for us, from their edition of *Boethius* in the Loeb series :

I that with youthful heat did verses write
Must now my woes in doleful tunes indite.
My work is framed by Muses torn and rude,
And my sad cheeks are with true tears bedewed :
For these alone no terror could affray
From being partners of my weary way.
The art that was my young life's joy and glory
Becomes my solace now I'm old and sorry ;
Sorrow has filched my youth from me, the thief !
My days are numbered not by time but grief.
Untimely hoary hairs cover my head,
And my loose skin quakes on my flesh half dead.
O happy death, that sparest sweetest years,
And comes in sorrow often called with tears.
Alas, how deaf is he to wretch's cries ;
And loath he is to close up weeping eyes ;
While trustless chance me with vain favours crowned,
That saddest hour my life had almost drowned :
Now she hath clouded her deceitful face,
My spiteful days prolong their weary race.
My friends, why did you count me fortunate?
He that is fallen, ne'er stood in settled state.

With this rendering we may compare the work of Queen Elizabeth, printing *v* and *u* where she wrote *u* and *v* :

Righmes that my groing studie ons perfourmed,
In teares, alas ! cumpeld, woful staves begin.
My muses torne, behold what write I shuld indites,
Wher tru woful verse my face with dole bedews.
Thes at lest no terror might constrain,
that felowes to our mone our way they shuld refrain.
The glory ons of happy griny ¹ Youthe
Now, fates of grounting Age, my comfort all.
Unlookt for Age hied by mishaps is come,
And Sorow bidz his time to add withal.
Unseasoned hore heares upon my hed ar powrd,
And loosed skin in feable body shakes.
Blessed dethe, that in switest ¹ yeres refraines,
but, oft calld, comes to the woful wights.

¹ The Queen writes *i* for *ss*.

O with how defe eare she from wretched wries,
 And wailing yees, cruel ! to shut denies.
 While gileful fortune with vading goodz did shine,
 My life wel ny the doleful houre bereved ;
 Whan her fals looke a cloude hath changed,
 My wretched life thankles abode protractz.
 Why me so oft, my frendz ! have you happy cald ?
 Who fauleth downe, in stedy step yet never stode.

Chaucer's prose translation of the Metre is as follows :

Allas ! I, weping, am constrained to begynnen vers of sorowful matere, that whylom in florisching studie made delitable dities. For lo ! rending Muses of poetes indyten to me thinges to be writen ; and drery vers of wrecchednesse weten my face with verray teres. At the leeste no drede ne mighte overcomen tho Muses, that they ne weren felawes, and folweden my wey ¹ ; they that weren glorie of my youthe, whylom weleful and grene, comforten now the sorowful werdes of me, olde man. For elde is comen unwarly upon me, hasted by the harmes that I have, and sorow hath comaunded his age to be in me. Heres hore ben shad overtymeliche upon myn heved, and the slake skin trembleth upon myn empted body. Thilke deeth of men is weleful that ne cometh not in yeres that ben swete, but cometh to wrecches, often y-cleped.

Allas ! Allas ! with how deef an ere deeth, cruel, torneth away fro wrecches, and waiteth to closen wepinge eyen ! Why ! Fortune, unfeithful, favorede me with lighte goodes, the sorowful houre ² hadde almost dreynt myn heved. But now, for Fortune cloudy hath chaunged hir deceyvable chere ³ to me-ward, myn unpitous lyf draweth a-long unagreable dwellinges. O ye, my frendes, what or whereto avauntede ye me to ben weleful ? for he that hath fallen stood nat in stedefast degree.

Moved by this Lay, Philosophy herself, once so great a power with him, now become a stranger, Philosophy appears on the scene, a commanding figure. She reproaches the Muse of Poetry, who has led the Philosopher astray and induced him to write hopelessly of his troubles. Mr. H. R. James renders the Prose adequately as follows :

“While I was thus mutely pondering within myself, and

¹ That is to seyn, when I was exyled.

² That is to seyn, the deethe.

³ Face.

recording my sorrowful complainings with my pen, it seemed to me that there appeared above my head a woman of countenance exceeding venerable. Her eyes were bright as fire, and of a more than human keenness ; her complexion was lively, her vigour showed no trace of enfeeblement ; and yet her years were right full, and she plainly seemed not of our age and time. Her stature was difficult to judge. At one moment it exceeded not the common height, at another her forehead seemed to strike the sky ; and whenever she raised her head higher, she began to pierce within the very heavens, and to baffle the eyes of them that looked upon her. Her garments were of an imperishable fabric, wrought with the finest threads and of the most delicate workmanship ; and these, as her own lips afterwards assured me, she had herself woven with her own hands. The beauty of this vesture had been somewhat tarnished by age and neglect, and wore that dingy look which marble contracts from exposure. On the lowermost edge was inwoven the Greek letter Π ¹, on the topmost the letter Θ ², and between the two were to be seen steps, like a staircase, from the lower to the upper letter. This robe, moreover, had been torn by the hands of violent persons, who had each snatched away what he could clutch. Her right hand held a note-book, in her left she bore a staff.

“When she saw the Muses of Poesie standing by my bedside, dictating the words of my lamentations, she was moved awhile to wrath, and her eyes flashed sternly. Who, said she, has allowed you play-acting wantons to approach this sick man, you who, so far from giving medicine to heal his malady, even feed it with sweet poison ? You it is who kill the rich crop of reason with the barren thorns of passion, who accustom men’s minds to disease, instead of setting them free. Were it some common man whom your allurements were seducing, as is usually your way, I should be less indignant. On such a one I should not have spent my pains for naught. But this is one trained in the Eleatic and Academic philosophies. Nay, get ye gone, ye sirens, whose sweetness lasteth not ; leave him for my muses to tend and heal !

“At these words of upbraiding, the whole band, in deepened sadness, with downcast eyes and blushes that confessed their shame, dolefully left the chamber.

¹ Political or Practical Life.

² Theoretical Life.

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"But I, because my sight was dimmed with much weeping, and I could not tell who was this woman of authority so commanding, I was dumbfounded, and with my gaze fastened on the earth continued silently to await what she might do next.

"Then she drew near me, and sat on the edge of my couch, and looking into my face all heavy with grief and fixed in sadness on the ground, she bewailed in these words the disorders of my mind ¹:

i. m. 2. *Heu quam præcipiti mersa profundo
Mens hebet, et propria luce relictæ,
Tendit in externas ire tenebras,
Terrenis quoties flatibus acta
Crescit in immensum noxia cura !
Hic quondam cœlo liber aperto,
Suetus in ætherios ire meatus,
Cernebat rosei lumina Solis,
Visebat gelidæ sidera Lunæ,
Et quæcumque vagos stella recursus
Exercet varios flexa per orbés,
Comprensam numeris victor habebat.
Quin etiam causas, unde sonora
Flamina sollicitent æquora ponti,
Quis volvat stabilem spiritus orbem,
Vel cur Hesperias sidus in undas
Casurum rutilo surgat ab ortu :
Quis Veris placidas temperet horas,
Et terras roseis floribus ornet :
Quis dedit ut pleno fertilis anno
Autumnus gravidis influat uvis,
Rimari solitus, atque latentis
Naturæ varias reddere causas :
Nunc jacet effœto colla catenis,
Declivemque gerens pondere vultum,
Cogitur, heu ! stolidam cernere terram.*

Dr. Stewart and Dr. Rand can again put this into English verse for us.

Alas ! how thy dull mind is headlong cast
In depths of woe, where, all her light once lost,
She doth to walk in utter darkness haste,
While cares grow great with earthly tempests test,

¹ It seems a little unphilosophical to drive out the Muses of Poesie as wantons, and immediately to become a Muse of Poesie herself. Augustine, or Gregory to name two of Alfred's authors, would have written pages on the point.

He that through opened heavens did freely run,
 And used to travel the celestial ways,
 Marking the rosy splendour of the sun,
 And noting Cynthia's cold and watery rays ;
 He that did bravely comprehend in verse
 The different spheres and wandering course of stars,
 He that was wont the causes to rehearse
 Why sounding winds do with the seas make wars,
 What spirit moves the world's well-settled frame,
 And why the sun, whom forth the east doth bring,
 In western waves doth hide his falling flame,
 Searching what power tempers the pleasing Spring
 Which makes the earth her rosy flowers to bear,
 Whose gift it is that Autumn's fruitful season
 Should with full grapes flow in a plenteous year,
 Telling of secret Nature every reason,
 Now having lost the beauty of his mind
 Lies with his neck compassed in ponderous chains ;
 His countenance with heavy weight declined,
 Him to behold the sullen earth constrains.

Queen Elizabeth puts it thus :

O, in how hedlong depth the drowned mind is dimme !
 and Losing Light, her owne, to others darkenis drawne,
 as oft as driven with erthely flawes the harmful care upward
 grows.

Wons this man free in open fild used the skies to vew.
 of Rose son the Light beheld,
 of frosty mone the planetes saw ;
 And what star elz runs her wonted cours,
 Wending by many Circles, this man had wone
 by number to knowe them all

Yes, Causis eache whens roring windz the seas perturbz ;
 acquainted with the spirit that rolles the stedy world,

And whi the star that falz to the Hisperia's waters
 from his reddy roote ¹ doth raise her self,

Who that gives the springes mild houres ther temper,
 that with rosy floures the erthe be decked,

Who made the fertile Autumne at fullist of the yere,
 Abound with grape al Solne ² with ripest fruits,

he, wonted to serche and find sondry causes of hiden nature,
 downe lies, of mindz Light bereved,

¹ *Ortus*, rising, not origin.

² Swollen.

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With brused Nek by overhevvy Chaines.
A bowed Lowe, Looke ! by waight bearing,
driven, alas ! the Sely erthe behold.

i. p. 2. Philosophy then bids Boethius think rather of remedy than of lamentation. She reminds him that in his earlier days she trained his mind to manliness of spirit ; tells him he has fallen into a lethargy from which she promises to recover him. She dries his eyes, clouded by tears.

"The time, said she, calls rather for healing than for lamentation. Then, with her eyes bent full upon me, she cries,

"Art thou the man who, erstwhile fed with the milk and reared upon the nourishment which is mine to give, had grown up to the full vigour of a manly spirit ? And yet I had bestowed such armour on thee as would have proved an invincible defence, hadst thou not first cast it away. Dost thou know me ? Why art thou silent ? Is it shame or amazement that hath struck thee dumb ? Would it were shame ! but, as I see, a stupor hath seized upon thee.

"Then, when she saw me not only answering nothing, but mute and utterly incapable of speech, she gently touched my breast with her hand, and said : There is no danger ; these are the symptoms of lethargy, the usual sickness of deluded minds. For a while he has forgotten himself ; he will easily recover his memory if only he first recognizes me. And that he may do so, let me now wipe his eyes that are clouded with a mist of mortal things. Thereat, with a corner of her robe she dried my eyes all swimming with tears."

It is evident that Dante drew a parallel between Philosophy tending Boethius and Beatrice tending himself, each leading and guiding upwards, to higher planes of spiritual thought (*Paradiso*, i. 100) :

Ond' ella, appresso d'un pio sospiro,
gli occhi drizzò ver me con quel sembiante
che madre fa sopra figliuol deliro ;
e cominciò :

"Whereon she, with a sigh of pity, turned her eyes toward me, with the look a mother casts on her delirious child ; and began :"

And the explanation which Beatrice gave to Dante is

practically identical with that which Philosophy gave to Boethius in the great Metre *O qui perpetua*, iii. 9 :

"All things whatsoever observe a mutual order : and this is the form that maketh the universe like unto God."

But that is not of necessity any evidence of conscious connexion with the *De Consolatione* in Dante's mind, for each poet was obviously working on Plato's *Timæus* and the Aristotelian theory of the Universe as given in that Dialogue.

i. m. 3. Tunc me discussa liquerunt nocte tenebræ,
Luminibusque prior rediit vigor :
Ut, cum præcipiti glomerantur sidera Coro,
Nimbosisque polus stetit imbribus,
Sol latet, ac nondum cœlo venientibus astris,
Desuper in terram nox funditur ;
Hanc si Threicio Boreas emissus ab antro
Verberet, et clausam reseret diem,
Emicat, et subito vibratus lumine Phœbus,
Mirantes oculos radiis ferit.

Mr. H. R. James Englishes this persuasively thus :

Then the gloom of night was scattered,
Sight returned unto mine eyes.
So when haply rainy Caurus
Rolls the storm clouds through the skies,
Hidden is the sun ; all heaven
Is obscured in starless night.
But if, in wild onset sweeping,
Boreas frees day's prisoned light,
All suddenly the radiant god outstreams,
And strikes our dazzled eyesight with his beams.

His eyes were opened. He recognized Philosophy as his teacher of old. She reminds him of the deaths and banishments of her pupils because they were a manifest contrast to the ways of the wicked, whose power was contemptible because they had no leader.

i. p. 3. "Even so, the clouds of my melancholy were broken up. I saw the clear sky, and regained the power to recognize the face of my physician. Accordingly, when I had lifted my eyes and fixed my gaze upon her, I beheld my nurse, Philosophy, whose halls I had frequented from my youth up.

"Ah ! why, I cried, mistress of all excellence, hast thou

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come down from on high, and entered the solitude of this my exile ? Is it that thou, too, even as I, mayest be persecuted with false accusations ? ”

“ Could I desert thee, child, said she, and not lighten the burden which thou hast taken upon thee through the hatred of my name, by sharing this trouble ? Even forgetting that it were not lawful for Philosophy to leave companionless the way of the innocent, should I, thinkest thou, fear to incur reproach or shrink from it, as though some strange new thing had befallen ? Thinkest thou that now, for the first time in an evil age, Wisdom hath been assailed by peril ? Did I not often in days of old, before my servant Plato lived, wage stern warfare with the rashness of folly ? In his lifetime, too, Socrates, his master, won with my aid the victory of an unjust death. And when, one after the other, the Epicurean herd, the Stoic, and the rest, each of them as far as in them lay went about to seize the heritage he left, and were dragging me off protesting and resisting, as their booty ; they tore in pieces the garment which I had woven with my own hands, and, clutching the torn pieces, went off, believing that the whole of me had passed into their possession. And some of them, because some traces of my vesture were seen upon them, were destroyed through the mistake of the lewd multitude, who falsely deemed them to be my disciples. It may be thou knowest not of the banishment of Anaxagoras, of the poison draught of Socrates, nor of Zeno’s torturing, because these things happened in a distant country ; yet mightest thou have learnt the fate of Arrius, of Seneca, of Soranus, whose stories are neither old nor unknown to fame. These men were brought to destruction for no other reason than that, settled as they were in my principles, their lives were a manifest contrast to the ways of the wicked. So there is nothing thou shouldst wonder at, if on the seas of this life we are tossed by storm-blasts, seeing that we have made it our chiefest aim to refuse compliance with evil-doers. And though, maybe, the host of the wicked is many in number, yet is it contemptible, since it is under no leadership but is hurried hither and thither at the blind driving of mad error. And if at times and seasons they set in array against us, and fall on in overwhelming strength, our leader draws off her forces into the citadel while they are busy plundering the useless baggage. But we from our vantage-ground, safe from all this wild work, laugh to see them making prize of

the most valueless of things, protected by a bulwark which aggressive folly may not aspire to reach."

Then Philosophy sang a song in noble praise of the man who under her guidance presented a firm and steadfast front to the blows of fortune :

- i. m. 4. *Quisquis composito serenus ævo,
 Fatum sub pedibus egit superbum,
 Fortunamque tuens utramque rectus,
 Invictum potuit tenere vultum ;
 Non illum rabies, minæque ponti
 Versum funditus excitantis æstum,
 Nec ruptis quoties vagus caminis
 Torquet fumificos Vesuvus ignes,
 Aut celsas soliti ferire turrets
 Ardentis via fulminis movebit.
 Quid tantum miseri feros tyrannos.
 Mirantur sine viribus furentes ?
 Nec speres aliquid, nec extimescas :
 Exarmaveris impotentis iram :
 At quisquis trepidus pavet vel optat,
 Quod non sit stabilis, suique juris,
 Abjecit clypeum, locoque motus
 Nectit qua valeat trahi catenam.*

That noble metre is adequately rendered thus by Mr. H. R. James :

Whoso calm, serene, sedate,
 Sets his foot on haughty fate,
 Firm and steadfast, come what will,
 Keeps his mien unconquered still ;
 Him the rage of furious seas,
 Tossing high wild menaces,
 Nor the flames from smoky forges
 That Vesuvius disgorges,
 Nor the bolt that from the sky
 Smites the tower, can terrify.
 Why then shouldst thou feel affright
 At the tyrant's weakling might ?
 Dread him not, nor fear no harm,
 And thou shalt his rage disarm.
 But who to hope or fear gives way
 Lost his bosom's rightful sway,

He has cast away his shield,
Like a coward fled the field,
He hath forged all unaware
Fetters his own neck must bear.

Having sung this song, Philosophy proceeds with her treatment. If Boethius would have her help, he must first tell her what is the ground of his trouble. Thereupon he describes what has befallen him, and states his defence. This famous passage may be called the speech for the accused.

i. p. 4. "Dost thou understand? she asks. Do my words sink into thy mind? Or art thou dull as the ass to the sound of the lyre¹? Why dost thou weep? Why do tears stream from thy eyes? Speak out, hide it not in thy heart.² If thou lookest for the physician's help, thou must needs disclose thy wound.

"Then I, gathering together what strength I could, began: Is there still need of telling? Is not the cruelty of fortune against me plain enough? Doth not the very aspect of this place move thee? Is this the library, the room which thou hadst chosen as thy constant resort in my home, the place where we so often sat together, and held discourse of all things in heaven and earth? Was my garb and mien like this, when I explored with thee nature's hid secrets, and thou didst trace for me with thy wand the courses of the stars, moulding the while my character and the whole conduct of my life after the pattern of the celestial order? Is this the recompense of my obedience? Yet thou hast enjoined by Plato's mouth the maxim that "States would be happy, either if philosophers ruled them, or if it should so befall that their rulers would turn philosophers." By his mouth likewise thou didst point out this imperative reason why philosophers should enter public life, to wit, lest, if the reins of government be left to unprincipled and profligate citizens, trouble and destruction should come upon the good. Following these precepts, I have tried to apply in the business of public administration the principles which I learnt from thee in leisured seclusion. Thou art my witness, and that divinity which hath implanted thee in the hearts of the wise, that I

¹ Philosophy asks this question in Greek, *Esne θνος π,ος λύραν*, a Greek proverb, usually *θνος λύρας*, "hearer" being understood.

² This also is said in Greek by Philosophy. It is a quotation from Homer, *ἔξαιδα, μή κεῦθε νόσφι*. The second half of the line might well have been quoted, *ἵνα εἶδομεν ἀμφω*.

brought to my duties no aim but zeal for the public good. For this cause I have become involved in bitter and irreconcilable feuds ; and, as happens inevitably if a man holds fast to the independence of conscience, I have had to think nothing of giving offence to the powerful in the cause of justice."

Boethius then proceeds with a statement of his public actions thus referred to. He goes at great length into the details, which are very interesting. In connexion with the charges against him, he specially mentions the forgery of incriminating letters. In his overthrow he sees every ruffian incited to new audacity, and the guiltless not only robbed of their peace of mind, but robbed even of all means of defence. All of this, as we shall see, Alfred omits. Moved to a climax of distress, he bursts forth with a noble poem of six stanzas, *O stelliferi conditor orbis*, calling upon the

- i. m. 5. Builder of yon starry dome,
 Thou that whirlest, throned eternal,
 Heaven's swift globe, and, as they roam,
 Guildst the stars by laws supernal :
 So in full-sphered splendour dight,
 Cynthia dims the lamps of night,
 But unto the orb fraternal
 Closer drawn doth lose her light.

Look, oh look upon this earth,
 Thou who on law's sure foundation
 Framedst all ! Have we no worth,
 We poor men, of all creation ?
 Sore we toss on fortune's tide ;
 Master, bid the waves subside !
 And earth's ways with consummation
 Of Thy heaven's order guide ! ¹

Then Philosophy, in no wise disturbed at my complainings, thus spake :

- i. p. 5. "When I saw thee sorrowful, in tears, I knew thee wretched and an exile ; but how far distant that exile was I should not have known had not thy speech revealed it. Thou hast strayed. Thou hast banished thyself. No one else could ever lawfully have had such power over thee.

¹ H. R. James.

"Call to mind thy country from which thou art sprung, not ruled by the multitude, as Athens was, but its Ruler and King one, who delights in the number of His citizens, not in their banishment; to submit to whose ordinances is perfect freedom. It is a most ancient law of that country that no one who there hath fixed his dwelling may be sent into exile. But he who hath ceased to wish to dwell there hath ceased to deserve it. So it is not so much the aspect of this prison that moves me, as thy aspect; not so much the library walls set off with glass and ivory, *comptos ebore et vitro*, that I miss, as the chamber of thy mind, wherein I once placed, not books, but that which gives books their value, the doctrines which my books contain.

"What thou hast said of thy services to thy country is true; less indeed than thy deservings. The charges against thee, that thou hast spoken of, whether those that are a credit to thee or those that are false, are publicly known. The crimes and deceits of the informers thou hast wisely passed over lightly, for the popular voice hath fully pronounced upon them. Thou hast complained bitterly of the injustice of the Senate. Thou hast grieved over the calumnia-tion and damage done to philosophy. Thou hast blazed against Fortune, the unfairness with which thy merits have been recompensed. Thou hast frantically prayed that the peace which reigns in heaven reign here on earth. For such tumultuous passions strong remedies are not proper. I will use mild methods, that the tumours may be softened till they can bear sharper remedies."

And so she sang :

i. m. 6. Numquam purpureum nemus
Lecturus violas petas
Cum saevis aquilonibus
Stridens campus inhorruit.

Seek not the flowery woods
For violet's sweet buds
When fields are overcast
With the fierce northern blast.¹

Here the physician's diagnosis ends, and the long course of healing treatment begins.

¹ Stewart and Rand.

CHAPTER V

ALFRED'S PRELUDE, INTRODUCTION, AND FIRST SIX METRES AND FIVE PROSES

Alfred's version of the Metres and Proses in Chapter iv—His own Prelude and historical Introduction, in prose and verse—Metre i. 1 in verse—His skilful compression of the remaining parts of Chapter iv.

WE can now proceed to give a translation of Alfred's Prelude and Introduction, all his own ; and also of the whole of Alfred's text which corresponds with the six Metres and the five Proses of Boethius already given. As in other sections of this volume, we shall mark Alfred's contributions and additions by single inverted commas. Our translations are taken from Mr. Fox and Dr. Sedgefield, and in a few cases from Professor Earle. It will be seen on page 300 that Alfred assumes the truth of the main charge which Boethius denied. But he acted as a very enlightened editor when he compiled an Introduction to cover that part of the book which he intended to omit.

ALFRED'S PRELUDE

There is not anything in the Latin to correspond to this.

' Alfred king was interpreter of this book and turned it from book Latin into English as it is now done. Sometimes he set it out word by word, sometimes by meaning, as he most plainly and clearly could, for the various and manifold worldly occupations which often busied him both in mind and in body. The cares are to us very hard to number which in his days came upon the kingdom which he had undertaken. And yet when he had learned this book, and turned it from Latin into the English language, he afterwards composed it into verse as is now done. And he now prays, and for God's name implores every one of those who list to read this book, that he would pray for him, and not blame him if he more rightly understand it than he is able to do. For every man must, according to the measure of

his understanding and according to his leisure, speak that he speaketh and do that he doeth.'

It has been stated above that both the Prelude and the Introduction, which Alfred himself prefixed to the *Boethius*, are found in prose in one manuscript and in verse in the other. The poetic form is, as usual, in very short lines, two of which we print in each line from Dr. Sedgefield's virile rendering (p. 177) :

Thus the old tale	Alfred told us
West Saxons' King.	He showed the cunning,
The craft of songmen.	Keenly he longed
Unto the people	to put forth songs
Men to make merry,	manifold stories,
Lest a weariness	should ward away
The man self-filled,	that small heed taketh
Of such in his pride.	Again I must speak,
Take up my singing,	the tale far known
Weave for mortals ;	let who will listen.

In Bohn's Antiquarian Library these poetic passages were put into rhyming English verse by Dr. Martin F. Tupper :

Thus to us did Alfred sing
 A spell of old ;
 Song-craft the West Saxon king
 Did thus unfold :
 Long and much he long'd to teach
 His people then
 These mixt-sayings of sweet speech,
 The joys of men.

ALFRED'S HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

There is not anything in the Latin to correspond to this.

' At the time when the Goths of the country of Scythia made war against the empire of the Romans, and with their kings named Rhadgast and Alaric took the city of Rome and subdued all the kingdom of Italy, which is between the mountains and the isle of Sicily, then after those kings Theodoric obtained possession of that kingdom, Theodoric was of the race of the Amals, and a Christian, but he persisted in the Arian heresy. He promised the Romans his friendship and that they should enjoy their ancient rights.

But he very ill performed that promise, and ended with much and grievous sin, so that besides other unnumbered crimes he bade slay Pope John.¹

'There was at that time a certain Consul, a chieftain we should call him, named Boethius. He was most wise in book learning and in worldly affairs. Perceiving the manifold evils that King Theodoric wrought on Christendom and on the leading men of Rome, he called to mind the favours and ancient rights which they had under the Cæsars, their ancient lords. Then began he to inquire, and study in himself, how he might take the kingdom from the unrighteous king and bring it under the power of righteous men of the true faith. He therefore privately sent letters to the Cæsar at Constantinople, which is the chief city of the Greeks and their kings' dwelling-place, because the Cæsar was of the kin of their ancient lords. He prayed the Cæsar to succour them in regard to their faith and their ancient rights. When the cruel King Theodoric heard of this, he gave orders to take Boethius to prison and lock him up.

'When it happened that the venerable man was fallen into so great straits, he was so much the more disturbed in his mind, as his mind had formerly been accustomed to worldly prosperity. And he found no comfort in the prison, but fell down on the floor and stretched himself, very sorrowful, and began to lament himself, and this he sang :

i. m. i. 'The lays which I, poor exile, once sang with joy, I must now mourning sing, and arrange with words unmeet. Though I formerly readily made them, I now, weeping and sobbing, wander from seemly words. Unfaithful prosperity hath blinded me, and now leaves me thus blinded in this dark cell. When I best trusted it, prosperity bereaved me of happiness, and turned its back upon me, and utterly fled from me. Why should my friends tell me I was a prosperous man ! How can he be prosperous who in prosperity cannot remain !'

The whole of the historical Introduction, written by King Alfred, was put into Anglo-Saxon verse, and is found in the "C" manuscript. It extends to eighty-four short double lines, of which we shall give the last sixteen to serve as an introduction to the first Lay, which in the Latin has not any preface or introduction. Alfred's instinctive sense that an

¹ John I was sent by Theodoric on an embassy to Constantinople. On his return Theodoric imprisoned him at Ravenna, and there he died of want.

introduction was needed did not mislead him. Dr. Sedgefield (p. 180) renders him thus :

<p>‘Theodoric the Amuling, Charging the braves To hold fast the hero ; The chieftain dreading. Bolted and barred Then was the man’s mood The mind of Boethius. High state worldly ; Bravely to bear Sad was the hero ; Locked in prison ; On the floor he fell Woefully spread, Hopeless utterly, He should linger in fetters. With cheerless voice,</p>	<p>the thane he had seized, that did his bidding fierce was his heart, Deep in a dungeon he bade them cast him. mightily troubled, Long had he borne the harder it was this bitter fortune he hoped for no mercy, past all comfort with his face downwards, his sorrow speaking, ever weening He called on the Lord and thus he chaunted.’</p>
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This brings us to the point where the Latin begins without preface with the first Metre.

<p>i. m. 1. ‘Ah ! many a lay I sang in my joy. Worn with weeping, Sing words of sorrow. And this wailing dazed, Can I turn so featly, Once I wove, Oft now I find not I that in old times Me, wellnigh blind, Drawn in my folly And robbed me entirely With their false faith, To them trusted. Their backs, oh ! cruelly, Ah ! why were ye minded, In speech or in song Here in this world ? For worldly blessings</p>	<p>once so merrily Now must I sighing, a woeful outcast, Me hath this sobbing so that no more ditties though many tales when I was happy. the words familiar, oft made strange ones. have these worldly blessings to this dim cavern, of reason and comfort when I had fain ever To me they have turned and kept joy from me. my friends of this world, to say I was happy The words are not true ones, abide not always.’</p>
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i. p. 1. ‘When I, said Boethius, had mournfully sung this lay, then came there in to me heavenly Wisdom and greeted my sorrowful Mind with words, saying (i. p. 2) : How ! Art thou

not the man who was nourished and instructed in my school ! Whence art thou become so greatly affected by these worldly cares ! I wot thou hast too soon forgotten the weapons which I formerly gave thee. Then Wisdom cried out and said : Depart now, ye accursed cares, from my disciple's Mind, ye are its greatest enemies. Let him turn again to my teaching. Then came Wisdom near to my sorrowing thought, said Boethius, and somewhat raised it, prostrate as it was, and drying its eyes, asked it with pleasant words whether it knew its foster-mother. Thereupon the Mind turned, and knew plainly its own mother, the Wisdom that had long before instructed and taught it. But its mantle was greatly torn and rent by the hands of foolish people, and he asked her how that happened. Then answered Wisdom that its scholars had torn it thus, when they were minded to possess themselves of it entirely. But they gather much folly by presumption and vainglory unless they return to Wisdom's healing care.

'Then began Wisdom to grieve for the frailty of the Mind, and began to sing, and this was the song (i. m. 2) : Alas ! into how deep a pit the Mind falls when the troubles of this world agitate it ! If it forget its own light, which is eternal joy, and rush into darkness, which is worldly cares, as this Mind now doth, naught else but lamentations doth it know.

'When Wisdom—that is, Reason—had sung this lay, Wisdom began to speak, and said to the Mind : I see there is now more need to thee of comfort than of bewailing. Therefore, if thou wilt be ashamed of thy error, then will I soon begin to bear thee up and will bring thee with me to the heavens. Then answered the sorrowing Mind : What ! are these now the good and the reward which thou didst promise to them that would obey thee ! Is this wise Plato's saying of which thou once toldest me, that no power was rightful without righteousness ? Seest thou not how the righteous are hated and oppressed because they would follow thy will ? And the unrighteous are exalted through their crimes and their self-love ? That they may the better accomplish their wicked purpose, they are assisted with gifts and riches. Therefore I will now earnestly call upon God. Then he¹ began to sing, and thus singing said² (i. m. 5) : O

¹ In the Latin, the names of Boethius's comforter are feminine, *Philosophia*, *Ratto*. In the Anglo-Saxon, *Wisdom* and *Gesceadwisnes* are masculine, and are referred to in Anglo-Saxon as *he*. Mr. Fox translates the *he* as "he." Dr. Sedgfield renders it as "she" throughout.

² i. m. 5. Alfred cleverly makes his Version appear to be continuous, while he omits Metres 3 and 4, and now with equal skill summarizes the six long stanzas of the fifth Metre.

thou Creator of heaven and earth, that rulest on the eternal throne. Thou who turnest the heaven in a swift course, that makest the stars obedient unto thee, that makest the sun with bright splendour dispel the darkness of the swarthy night. So doth the moon with pale light obscure the bright stars in the heavens ; and sometimes bereaves the sun of light when betwixt the sun and us ; and sometimes obscures the bright star which we call the morning star, the same we call by its other name, the evening star. Thou who to the winter days givest short times and to the summer days longer. Thou who bereavest the trees of their leaves in harvest by the stark north-east wind, and again in spring through the mild south-west winds givest other leaves ! What ! do all creatures obey thee, and keep the decrees of thy commandments, except man alone who is disobedient ? O thou almighty Maker and governor of all creatures, help now thy miserable man kind ! Wherefore, O Lord, ever wouldest thou that fortune should so vary ? She afflicts the innocent, and afflicts not the guilty. The wicked sit on thrones and trample the holy under their feet. Bright virtues lie hid and the unrighteous deride the righteous. False swearing in no wise injures a man, nor the false lot which is with fraud concealed. Therefore almost all mankind will now wend in doubt, if fortune may thus change according to the will of evil men, and thou wilt not control her. O my Lord ! Thou who overseest all creatures, look now mercifully on this miserable earth, and on all mankind, for it now all struggles in the waves of this world.

i. p. 5. 'Whilst the Mind was uttering such sorrow, and was singing this lay, Wisdom, that is Reason, looked on him with cheerful eyes, and was nothing disturbed on account of the Mind's lamentation, but said to the Mind : As soon as I first saw thee in this trouble, thus complaining, I perceived that thou wast departed from thy native country, that is, from my precepts. Thou departedst therefrom when thou didst abandon thy fixed state of mind, and thoughtest that fortune governed this world according to her own pleasure, regardless of God's counsel and permission and men's deserts. I knew that thou wert departed, but I knew not how far, until thou thyself toldest to me by thy lamentations. But though thou art now further than thou wert, thou art not nevertheless entirely driven from thy country, though thou has wandered therein. Nor, moreover, could any other man lead thee into error, except thyself through thine own

negligence. Nor could any one thus believe it of thee, if thou wouldest call to mind of what families thou wert, and of what citizenship as to the world : or again spiritually, of what society thou wert in thy mind and in thy reason ; that is, that thou art one of the just, and of those who are of right will, 'who are the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem.' Thence no man was ever driven, unless he were willing, that is, of his own good will. Wherever he might be, he had this always with him ; when he had this with him, wheresoever he might be he was with his own kin and with his own citizens in his own land when he was in the company of the just. Whosoever then is worthy of this, that he may be in their service, he is in the highest freedom.

'I shun not this inferior, this unclean place, if I find thee well instructed. I am not desirous of walls wrought with glass, 'or of thrones ornamented with gold and with jewels, nor am I so desirous of books written with gold' as I am desirous of a right will in thee.¹ I seek not here books, but that which books are profitable for, that I may make thy Mind perfectly right. Thou complainest of evil fortune, both on account of the height of unjust power and on account of my meanness and dishonour ; and also on account of the uncontrolled licence of the wicked, with respect to these worldly goods. But as very great trouble has now come upon thee, both from thine anger and from thy sorrow, I may not yet answer thee before the time for it arrives. For whatever is untimely begun hath no perfect ending.'

Thus ends Alfred's treatment of the opening Metres and Proses of Boethius, down to Prose 5 inclusive. We have taken the whole of these three pages from Mr. Fox's translation.

¹ Alfred's addition of thrones ornamented with gold and jewels, and books written with gold, is remarkable, especially the books written with gold. We cannot doubt that he wrote of what he had seen and had been taught as a boy to admire. The story of the illuminated manuscript offered to him as a prize for learning to read is given in the general Introduction to this volume, page xiv.

CHAPTER VI

PROSE I. 6—PROSE II. 5

Philosophy tests the state of mind of Boethius—Applies a soothing remedy—The Lay—Philosophy applies a bracing tonic—Fickleness of Fortune—Riches—Riches ask questions—The splendour of the former position of Boethius—Causes for rejoicing which he still has—Boethius and Alfred on the affection of a wife—Man's truest course for safety of tenure, ii. m. 4—Alfred's prose version of this Metre—The Metres and the Lays.

QUEEN ELIZABETH's aim to render the Metres of Boethius into English verse of corresponding form found a serious obstacle in the Seventh Metre of the First Book. She accomplished the task in a creditable—in some respects remarkable—manner.

i. p. 6. Philosophy had asked in the Sixth Prose a number of fundamental questions, to test the state of mind of Boethius. She then declared that she had made full discovery of the causes of the mind's sickness and the means of restoring its health. The causes were serious enough to produce not sickness only, but death. There were three main causes. Because he had forgotten himself, his mind was so bewildered that he bewailed himself as an exile, stripped of the blessings that were his. Because he knew not the end of existence, he deemed abominable men to be happy and powerful. Because he had forgotten by what means the earth is governed, he deemed that the ebb and flow of fortune's changes had not the restraint of a guiding hand. But the light of nature had not yet left him utterly. In his true judgment concerning the world's government, now restored by suggestive questionings, in his belief that the world was subject, not to the random drift of chance but to divine reason, a belief which had been renewed, there was the divine spark from which recovery might be hoped. But as it was not yet time for strong remedies, Philosophy would disperse the mists of the mind by a soothing application, that the darkness of misleading passion might be scattered, and Boethius might come to discern the splendour of the true light.

Alfred's rendering of this careful Prose is remarkably simple and clear, full of his usual enlightening touches, as when the "divine spark" mentioned above comes before him he renders the passage thus: 'From the little spark which thou settest to the tinder the light of life has shone upon thee.'

The following is the "soothing application," with the Queen's rendering set over against it:

i. m 7. 1. Nubibus atris	Dim cloudes
Condita nullum	Skie close
Fundere possunt	Light none
Sidera lumen.	Can afourd.
Si mare volvens	If roling seas
Turbidus Auster	boustius Sowth
Misceat aestum,	Mixe his fome
Vitrea dudum	Grimy ones
Parque serenis	Like the clirrist
10. Unda diebus	days the water
Mox resolutio	straight moude
Sordida caeno	sturred up al foule
Visibus obstat.	the sight gainsais.
Quique vagatur	Running streame
Montibus altis	that poures
Defluus amnis,	from hiest hils
Saepe resistit	Oft is staid
Rupe soluti	by slaked
Obice saxi.	stone of rock.
20. Tu quoque si vis	Thou if thou wilt
Lumine claro	in clirest light
Cernere verum	trothe behold,
Tramite recto	by straight lin
Carpere callem,	hit in the pathe :
Gaudia pelle,	Chase joys,
Pelle timorem,	repulse feare,
Spemque fugato	thrust out hope,
Nec dolor adsit.	Wo not retain.
Nubila mens est	Cloudy is the mind
30. Vincitque frenis	With snaffe bound,
Haec ubi regnant.	Where they raigne.

The Queen was accustomed to write *i* for *ee*, as in *griny*.

Chaucer makes a curious mistake in his rendering of

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aestum in line 7, and is driven to a still more curious explanation of the phenomenon which he has created.

"The sterres covered with blake cloudes ne mowen yeten adoun no light. Yif the trouble wynde that hyght Auster, turnynge and walwynge the see medleth the *hete*, *that is to seyn the boylynge vp from the botme*, the wawes that weren whylome clere as glas, and lyke to the fayre bright dayes, wythstande anon the syghtes of men, by the fylthe and ordure that is resolved."

To the Anglo-Saxon poet the form of the verse did not present any special difficulty. It was, indeed, his own natural metre, a short line with a twofold *ictus*. Alfred's prose rendering of the Metre and the poetic rendering of the Lay are very fairly close to the Latin, especially in verses 5 to 13, where they run as follows :

'So too at times the south wind in fierce storms stirreth up the sea that before was in calm weather as clear as glass to look upon ; but as soon as it is troubled by the surging waves it very quickly groweth gloomy that was but now so smiling to behold.'

The Lay introduces a topical reference to northern waters, very far from the mind of Boethius (Dr. Sedgefield, p. 184) :

So too the south breeze	fiercely stirreth
The calm gray ocean	clear as glass :
Then mighty billows	mingle the waters,
Stir the whale-sea ;	fierce waxeth ocean
That shortly before	was blithe to look on.

In other parts of the Metre, the Lay wanders off into moral lessons, and extends itself into forty-five double lines in place of the thirty-one single lines of the original. The six lines 14 to 19, containing twelve words in the Latin, are given in the Lay as follows :

Oft too the well-spring	is wont to trickle
From the hoar cliff,	cool and sparkling,
And onward flowing	a straight course followeth,
To its home fleeteth,	till there falleth upon it
A rock from the mountain,	that lieth in its midst
Rolled from the peak ;	parted in twain
The rill is broken,	the brook's clear water
Stirred and clouded ;	the stream is turned
Away from its course,	cleft into runnels.

The rendering of this Metre by Messrs. Stewart and Rand is very successful. It keeps in effect the crisp shortness of the original lines, although the less pregnancy of our English words enforces the use of a larger number of words to express the concise Latin.

When stars are shrouded
 With dusky night,
 They yield no light
 Being so clouded.
 When the wind moveth
 And churneth the sea,
 The flood, clear as day,
 Foul and dark proveth
 And rivers creeping
 Down a high hill
 Stand often still,
 Rocks them back keeping.
 If thou wouldst brightly
 See Truth's clear rays,
 Or walk those ways
 Which lead most rightly,
 All joy forsaking
 Fear thou must fly,
 And hopes defy,
 No sorrow taking.
 For where these terrors
 Reign in the mind,
 They it do bind
 In cloudy errors.

Having administered the soothing application promised at the end of Prose 6 of Book I, Philosophy feels that the time has come to apply a tonic. This she does, in frank prose :

ii. p. 1. Thou grieveest because Fortune has changed ; prosperity has deserted thee. But thou knewest that Fortune was changeable. When thou hadst prosperity, thou hadst no certainty of its abiding. Thou complainest of the inconstancy of Fortune. But surely her change to thee proves her constancy to her principle, which is, to be inconstant. Didst thou really rest thy happiness on that which is so unstable, on that which thou couldst not of thyself keep, couldst not feel sure of ? Thou hadst resigned thyself to

the sway of Fortune ; thou must submit to thy mistress's caprices. Wouldst thou stay the motion of the revolving wheel ? Oh stupidest of mortals, if it takes to standing still, it ceases to be Fortune's wheel.

Philosophy here chants another Metre, of curious and not very pleasing construction, which Alfred's prose and the poetic Lays omit. As it emphasizes the argument on the fickleness of Fortune we give it here in Mr. James's spirited verse :

- ii. m. i. Mad Fortune sweeps along in wanton pride,
 Uncertain as Euripus' surging tide ¹ ;
 Now tramples mighty kings beneath her feet,
 Now sets the conquered in the victor's seat.
 She heedeth not the rule of hapless woe,
 But mocks the griefs that from her mischief flow.
 Such is her sport ; so proveth she her power ;
 And great the marvel when in one brief hour
 She shows her darling lifted high in bliss,
 Then headlong plunged in misery's abyss.

The omission of this Metre does not make any break in Alfred's treatment of the question of Fortune. He proceeds, as does Philosophy, to the discussion of one particular subject of Fortune's dealings, namely riches. Following very closely the original, he represents Wisdom, or Philosophy, arguing thus :

- ii. p. 2. Plead thy cause before any judge thou wilt. If thou canst prove that any mortal man ever owned any mortal thing, I will restore to thee whatsoever thou canst prove to have been thine own. Be well assured that if that had been thine own wealth the loss of which thou mournest, thou couldst never have lost it. I received thee foolish and untaught when first thou camest into the world, and I trained and taught thee, and brought thee to that wisdom wherewith thou didst win those worldly honours from which thou hast parted in such sorrow. My servants are knowledge and skill of various kinds, and true riches ; with these I have ever been wont to disport, and with them I sweep over the whole heavens. The lowest I raise up to the highest, and the highest I put in the lowest place ; that is, the lowly I

¹ *Et æstuantis more fertur Euripi.* The ordinary word *euripus*, a strait, is used here in a particular sense. Euripus, now Egripos, was the channel between Aulis, a port of Boetia and the island Eubœa. The stream waxes and wanes seven times and more in one day and night. From this excess of flowing, the reading *æstuantis* has been suggested.

exalt to heaven, and bring blessings down from heaven unto the lowly. 'When I rise aloft with these my servants, we look down upon the storms of this world, even as the eagle does when he soars in stormy weather above the clouds where no storm can harm him.'

Then Alfred takes a characteristically bold departure from his original. He endows riches with power of speech. How often, of late, have some of us asked, when we hear some inanimate object criticized, What would that thing reply, if it had the power of speech? We were following in the steps of King Alfred.

'How wilt thou answer Riches, he asks, if she say to thee, Why dost thou reproach me, O Mind? Why art thou enraged against me? In what have I angered thee? 'Twas thou that first desiredst me, not I thee; thou didst set me on the throne of thy Creator, when thou lookedst to me for the good thou shouldst seek from Him. Thou sayest I have deceived thee; but I may rather answer that thou hast deceived me, seeing that by reason of thy lust and thy greed the Creator of all things hath been forced to turn away from me. Thou art indeed more guilty than I, both for thine own wicked lusts, and because, owing to thee, I am not able to do the will of my Maker. He lent me to thee, to enjoy in accordance with his commandments, and not to perform the will of thine unlawful greed.

'Answer us both now, said Philosophy, as thou wilt; both of us await thine answer.

Then said the Mind, I confess myself guilty on every point, and I am so sore stricken with remorse for my sin that I cannot answer you.'

Philosophy proceeds to describe in detail the splendour of the former position of Boethius. Alfred cuts out all of this, and replaces it with a few references about fleeting honours and joys, on which he expatiates in accordance with his original. He asks in conclusion, 'Tell me, O Mind, since naught in this life may endure unchanging, which deemest thou the better? Art thou to despise these earthly joys, and willingly give them up without a pang; or to wait till they give thee up, and leave thee sorrowing?'

Alfred then proceeds to give in prose the very pretty third Metre of Book II:

Cum polo Phoebus roseis quadrigis
Lucem spargere coeperit,

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ii. m. 3. 'When the sun shineth brightest in the cloudless heaven, he dimmeth the light of all the stars, for their brightness is as nothing compared with his. When the south-west breeze softly bloweth, the flowers of the field grow apace ; but when the strong wind cometh out of the north-east, right soon it destroyeth the beauty of the rose. Again the north wind in its fury lasheth the calm ocean. Alas ! there is nothing in the world that endureth firmly for ever !' The Lay follows this closely.

In the next Prose, Boethius makes Philosophy dwell upon the cause of rejoicing which still remains to him, in the existence in safety of his distinguished father-in-law Symmachus, and of his own wife the daughter of Symmachus. The descriptions of the position of this noble lady by Boethius and by Alfred are eminently worthy of comparison.

"Thy wife liveth," the Latin says in the words chosen by Boethius, "modest in disposition, eminent in chastity, and, to rehearse briefly all her excellent gifts, like her father. She liveth, I say, and weary of her life, reserveth her breath only for thee. Wherein alone even I must grant that thy felicity is diminished, she consumeth herself with tears and grief for thy sake."

Alfred puts much more warmth into his version of this. He writes as a man who knows how sweet the love of a wife can be.

'Is not thy wife also living, daughter of this same Symmachus, a virtuous and modest lady, beyond all women in chastity. All the good in her I may sum up in a word : in all her ways she is her father's daughter. For thee she lives, for thee alone, as she loves nothing else but thee. Every blessing of this life is hers ; but all hath she scorned for thy sake, refusing all not having thee ; that is her only want. By reason of thine absence, all that she hath seems naught to her, for in her great love for thee she is in despair and wellnigh dead with weeping and sorrow.'

We may continue to follow Alfred in his version of this remarkable Prose.

'No unbearable affliction hath yet befallen thee, for thine anchor is still fast in the ground, I mean thy father-in-law and thy sons.

'To this the sorrowing Mind made answer, saying, Oh, would that the anchors were as fast and enduring, in respect of God and the world, as thou sayest ! Then could I far

more easily bear such adversities as might befall me, for they all seem lighter, so the anchors hold.'

Thereupon Philosophy chants one of the finest of her Metres, pointing out man's truest course for safety of hold.

ii. m. 4. Boethius

Quisquis volet perennem
Cautus ponere sedem,
Stabilisque nec sonori
Sterni flatibus Euri,
Et fluctibus minantem
Curat spernere pontum,
Montis cacumen alti,
Bibulas vitet arenas.
Illud protervus Auster
Totis viribus urget ;

Hae pendulum solutae
Pondus ferre recusant.
Fugiens periculosam
Sortem sedis amoenae,
Humili domum memento
Certus figere saxo.
Quamvis tonet ruinis

Miscens aequora ventus ;
Tu conditus quieti
Felix robore valli,
Duces serenae aevum,
Ridens aetheris iras.

H. R. James

Who founded firm and sure
Would ever live secure,
In spite of storm and blast
Immovable and fast ;
Whoso would fain deride
The ocean's threatening tide ;
His dwelling should not seek
On sands or mountain-peak.
Upon the mountain's height
The storm-winds wreak their
spite.

The shifting sands disdain
Their burden to sustain.
Do thou these perils flee,
Fair though the prospect be,
And fix thy resting-place
On some low rock's sure base.
Then, though the tempests
roar,

Seas thunder on the shore,
Thou in thy stronghold blest
And undisturbed shalt rest ;
Live all thy days serene,
And mock the heaven's spleen.

We may add the rendering of the Loeb version :

Who with an heedful care
Will an eternal seat prepare,
Which cannot be down cast
By force of windy blast,
And will the floods despise,
When threatening billows do arise,
He not on hills must stand,
Nor on the dangerous sinking sand.
For there the winds will threat,
And him with furious tempests beat,
And here the ground too weak
Will with the heavy burden break.

Fly then the dangerous case
 Of an untried delightful place,
 And thy poor house bestow
 In stony places firm and low.
 For though the winds do sound,
 And waves of troubled seas confound :
 Yet thou to rest disposed
 In thy safe lowly vale inclosed,
 Mayst live a quiet age,
 Scorning the air's distempered rage.

This beautiful metre may be taken as affording a palmary example of Alfred's prose treatment of Boethius's verse. He translates a portion of the Metre, in prose, and then inserts his interpretation, application, or comment.

He that would build a house to last must not place it high on the hill-top. 'And he that desireth Divine Wisdom cannot find it with pride.' Again, he that would build an enduring habitation should not set it on sandhills. 'So also, if thou wilt build up Wisdom, base it not on covetousness.' As the crumbling sand drinketh up the rain, 'so covetousness swalloweth up the fleeting goods of this earth, being ever athirst for them.' No house may stand for long on a very high hill, if a very mighty wind assail it; nor again one that is built on crumbling sand, by reason of the heavy rains. 'So too the soul of man is undermined and moved from its place when the wind of sore hardship assaileth it, or the rain of excessive anxiety. Whoever would seek eternal happiness' must flee from the perilous beauty of the earth, and build the house of his mind upon the firm rock of humility. 'For Christ dwelleth in the Valley of Humility and in the Memory of Wisdom.¹ Therefore it is that the wise man spendeth all his life in joy unchangeable and freedom from care, despising these earthly delights and those that are evil, and putting his hope in the joys to come that are eternal. For God encompasseth him on every side, living as he doth ever in the joys of the soul, though the wind of adversity blow against him, and the ceaseless care begotten of worldly pleasures.'

The very close connexion of the Anglo-Saxon Lays with the Anglo-Saxon prose renderings of Boethius's Metres is

¹ *Gemynde wisdomes*. Professor Earle translates this "the monumental stone of Wisdom."

shown very clearly here. The long insertion given above, 'For Christ dwelleth . . . worldly pleasures,' appears thus in Dr. Sedgefield's Lay (p. 187) :

For in that vale of the lowly	the Lord Himself
Ever abideth,	owneth His Home ;
And there too Wisdom	in memory waiteth.
A life without sorrow	he always leadeth
That chooseth wisdom ;	it never changeth,
Since he disdaineth	delights of the world,
From every evil	utterly free ;
He hopeth in eternity	hereafter to come.
Him then everywhere	God Almighty
Keepeth always,	ever unceasing,
Fast abiding	in the blessed joys
Of his own mind,	through the Master's grace,
Though oft the winds	of worldly troubles
Batter and bruise him,	or never bating
Cares be fretting,	when the fierce gusts
Of worldly blessings	blow unkindly,
Though him ever	the endless worry
Of earthly fortune	sore confound him.

Two-thirds of the Anglo-Saxon prose rendering of the Metre is Alfred's own, not found in the Latin, and all of this additional matter is found in the Anglo-Saxon Lay.

This Metre is followed by a long Prose, which we may summarize in few words :

ii. p. 5. Suppose the gifts of Fortune were not fleeting. What is there in them that can become truly thine ? Riches ? Mere heaps of gold and silver. And how are they a gain to thee ? Only when thou partest with them to buy something, and then they cease to be thine. And to have acquired riches you must have lessened other men's gains. Gems ? Their brilliancy is of the gem, not of the man ; and can anything really be beautiful to a being with life and reason if it lack the movement of life ? The beauty of the fields ? It is a beautiful part of a beautiful whole. But it is not thine. Art *thou* decked with spring's flowers ? Never can fortune make that thine which is by nature excluded from thy ownership. Raiment of divers colours ? Men admire its texture, or the skill of the workman who made it, not thee. A long train of servants ? If vicious, they are a burden and a danger to thee ; if honest, thou canst not reckon their

virtue as a part of thy possessions. The varied furniture of thy house? It needs great pains to keep it secure. In all thy desires for such possessions thou dost wrong to thy Maker. He meant mankind to excel all things on earth. You thrust down your worth below vile things when you take these things to be your good. Again, can anything be good that injures its possessor? You rightly answer No. But riches have continually injured their possessors. And if you possess riches, you are always afraid of their being taken from you by violence. Wonderful happiness of possession, that makes you feel unsafe!

Alfred after his fashion expands the idea of the last two sentences in a graphic manner. Boethius had used the idea of Juvenal,¹ *coram latrone cantares*, if you had no money you could sing when a robber came. Alfred makes the robber come. 'He that hath much wealth dreadeth many foes; if he had nothing, no need for him to fear any one. If thou wert a traveller, and hadst much gold on thee, and wert to fall among a company of robbers, why, thou wouldst despair of thy life; whereas if thou hadst nothing about thee thou wouldst need to fear naught, but couldst go on thy way singing the old verse that was sung of yore, that the naked wayfarer hath naught to dread. Being then free from care, and the robbers departed, thou couldst mock at wealth, saying, Verily a fine and pleasant thing it is to have great riches, when he that hath them hath no peace!'

¹ Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator.—*Sat. x. 22.*

CHAPTER VII

METRE II. 5—METRE II. 7

The good old times—Metre ii. 5 in English verse—Prose ii. 6, the desire for power and dignities—Prose ii. 7, fame and glory—The shortness of a lifetime ; of ten thousand years compared with eternity—Alfred's view of earthly power—Metre ii. 7 in English verse—Alfred and Wayland the Smith—The origin of the Völundr Saga—Other examples in England—Wayland Smith's Cave.

THE Metre which follows Prose ii. 5, *Felix nimium prior ætas*, is one of the most beautiful of the Metres. It has but slight connexion with the Prose which precedes it, and with the Prose that follows it. Alfred's prose rendering cuts it rather short, even when his several insertions, such as a geographical and descriptive note on Ætna, are included. Stewart and Rand render it thus :

- ii. m. 5. Too much the former age was blest,
 When fields their pleaséd owners failéd not,
 Who, with no slothful lust oppress,
 Broke their long fasts with acorns eas'ly got.
 No wine with honey mixed was,
 Nor did they silk in purple colours steep ;
 They slept upon the wholesome grass,
 And their cool drink did fetch from rivers deep.
 The pines did hide them with their shade,
 No merchants through the dangerous billows went,
 Nor with desire of gainful trade
 Their traffic into foreign countries sent.
 Then no shrill trumpets did amate
 The minds of soldiers with their daunting sounds,
 Nor weapons were with deadly hate
 Dyed with the dreadful blood of gaping wounds.
 For how could any fury draw
 The mind of man to stir up war in vain ;
 When nothing but fierce wounds he saw,
 And for his blood no recompense should gain ?
 O that the ancient manners would

In these our latter hapless times return !
 Now the desire of having gold
 Doth like the flaming fires of Ætna burn.
 Ah, who was he that first did show
 The heaps of treasure which the earth did hide,
 And jewels which lay close below,
 By which he costly dangers did provide ?

The Prose which follows, and the Prose which we are to take next after that, afford good opportunities for observing how very freely Alfred supplements Boethius.

ii. p. 6. Boethius shows us Philosophy arguing that power is never a good thing unless its possessor is good ; when power is beneficent, its beneficence is due to the man who wields it. Alfred steps in :

‘ Therefore it is, that a man never by his authority attains to virtue and excellence, but by reason of his virtue and excellence he attains to authority and power. No man is better for his power ; for his skill he is good, if he is good, and for his skill he is worthy of power, if he is worthy of power. Study Wisdom, then, and when ye have learned it condemn it not, for I tell you that by its means ye may without fail attain to power, yea, even though not desiring it. Ye need not take thought for power nor endeavour after it, for if only ye are wise and good it will follow you, even though ye seek it not. Tell me now, O Mind, what is the height of thy desire in wealth and power ? Is it not this present life, and the perishable wealth that we have spoken of ? ’

O ye foolish men, Boethius resumes, do ye know what riches are, and power, and worldly weal ? They are your lords and rulers, not ye theirs.

Here Boethius passes on to a criticism of Fortune in connexion with the gift of power.

What harm, Philosophy has asked, can one man do to another that others may not do to him ? Alfred dwells on the case of Bosiris, an Egyptian king of whom Orosius tells in his history, and Augustine writes in his *City of God*. It was the custom of this oppressor, Alfred tells us in his expansion of this Prose, ‘ to receive every comer with great honour, and treat him as a friend immediately on his coming ; but afterwards, before it was time for his departure, he had him put to death.’¹ Now it happened that Erculus, son of

¹ Orosius explains that Busiris offered the stranger in sacrifice to his gods.

Jobe, came to him, and the king thought to treat him as he had treated many a former visitor, drowning him in the river Nile. But Erculus was the stronger, and very rightly and by God's will drowned him instead.¹

Rank and power! With this power you men would rise to heaven if you could. And yet your power only enables you to do to others what others may in turn do to you.

Rank and power! If they fall to a bad man, what an Ætna of mischief! If to a good man, honour comes to him not by his rank but by his virtue. Again, if there were any good in rank and power, they would never come to the bad man; Nature abhors a union of contrarieties. Indeed this argument can be used against all the gifts of Fortune, that all can come to bad men. A man who shows a brave spirit is brave. A man who can run fast is swift-footed. Music makes a man a musician; gifts of healing, a physician; rhetoric, a speaker. Each has its proper working; with no confusion of contrary things. But wealth cannot expel greed, nor indulgence lust, nor rank and power unworthiness; nor can power make a man powerful. By this test Fortune is judged. She does not join herself only to good men. Nor does she make good men of those to whom she joins herself. So far Boethius. Alfred again steps in.

'Since, therefore, every creature shuns its opposite, and strives amain to repel it, what two things can be more opposed than good and evil, which we never find conjoined? ¹ Thus, then, thou mayest understand that if the joys of this present life had control over themselves and were good in their own nature, they would ever cleave to him for good and not for evil. But when they happen to be good, they are so by the goodness of him that uses them for good, and he gets his goodness from God; whereas, if a bad man have them, they are evil by reason of the evil of him that doeth evil with them, and through the working of the devil.'

ii. m. 6. That long Prose ended, Philosophy has sung in Metre 6 of the evil use made of sovereign power by the Emperor Nero, who—Alfred interjects—burned Rome that he might see how long it took to burn as compared with Troy.

ii. p. 7. The Mind, in reply to the argument of Philosophy's Metre, disclaims all idea of desiring power for power's sake. Ambition had but little swayed the Mind. The real

¹ We may suppose that Alfred was thinking of conjunction in working for some purpose, whether a good or an evil purpose.

aim had been to have opportunity for action, lest virtue, in default of exercise, should languish.

This was self-praise. Philosophy came down upon it heavily in a long tirade. This, she declares, is the last infirmity of minds of noble quality, the desire of glory and fame for high services rendered to the commonwealth. How poor and unsubstantial! This globe, compared with the expanse of heaven, is so small a point as not to be space at all. Ptolemy has shown that only one-fourth part of it is occupied by creatures known to us. From that fourth part take away seas, marshes, deserts. An exceedingly small part is left for human habitation. Do you care to blazon your glory over that small area?

Think how many are left in oblivion from want of a record. And written records fail in time. And you aim at immortality of fame? A moment of time has some relation to ten thousand years; but ten thousand years have no relation to eternity. A finite period can never be compared with an infinite. And what concern can you have with worldly fame after the dissolution of the body? If men die wholly, which our reasonings forbid us to believe, there is no such thing as glory for the non-existent. If the mind, released from its earthly prison, seeks heaven in free flight, what care has it for earthly glory when it enters upon the joys of heaven?

Alfred stoutly identifies himself with the attitude of the Mind in the opening sentence of this summary of the Prose; opportunity, not ambition, his desire. And this is how he expands his identification, before he proceeds to take any notice of the long tirade that followed. It is one of the greatest of the personal treasures of Alfred's mind that his books have left to us.

The Mind had answered, I never greatly delighted in the possession of earthly power, nor longed for this authority. But I, Alfred says for himself, 'I desired instruments and materials to carry out the work I was set to do, which was, that I should virtuously and fittingly administer the authority committed unto me. Now no man, as thou knowest, can get full play for his natural gifts, nor conduct and administer government, unless he hath fit tools, and the raw material to work upon. By material I mean that which is necessary to the exercise of natural powers. Thus a king's raw material and instruments of rule are a well-peopled land, and he must

have men of prayer, men of war, and men of work. As thou knowest, without these tools no king may display his special talent. Further, for his materials he must have means of support for the three classes here spoken of, which are his instruments; and these means are, land to dwell in, gifts, weapons, meat, ale, clothing, and what else soever the three classes need. Without these means he cannot keep his tools in order, and without these tools he cannot perform any of the tasks entrusted to him.'

The Mind had told Philosophy that it had desired material for the exercise of government, in order that the talents and power of the Mind might not be forgotten and hidden away. This too Alfred adopts as his own attitude,

'For,' he concludes, 'every good gift and every power soon groweth old and is no more heard of, if Wisdom be not in them. Without Wisdom no faculty can be fully brought out, for whatsoever is done unwisely can never be accounted as skill. To be brief, I may say that it has been ever my desire to live honourably while I was alive, and after my death to leave to them that should come after me my memory in good works.'

Thus ends Alfred's simple expression of noble ideals.

The beautiful metre ii. 7, *Quicumque solam mente præcipiti petit, Summumque credit, gloriam*, with its typical ending *Jam vos secunda mors manet*, led Alfred to make an insertion or alteration which has for us English people, especially the northerners of Yorkshire and Lancashire and the midlanders of Berkshire, a high archæological value. Stewart and Rand render the Metre adequately:

He that to honour only seeks to mount
 And that his chiefest end doth count,
 Let him behold the largeness of the skies
 And on the strait earth cast his eyes;
 He will despise the glory of his name,
 Which cannot fill so small a frame.
 Why do proud men scorn that their necks should bear
 The yoke which every man must wear?
 Though fame through many nations fly along
 And should be blazed by every tongue,
 And houses shine with our forefathers' stories,
 Yet Death contemns these stately glories,

And, summoning both rich and poor to die,
 Makes the low equal with the high.
 Who knows where faithful Fabrice' bones are pressed,
 Where Brutus and strict Cato rest ?
 A slender fame consigns their titles vain
 In some few letters to remain.
 Because their famous names in books we read,
 Come we by these to know the dead ?
 You dying, then, remembered are by none,
 Nor any fame can make you known.
 But if you think that life outstrippeth death,
 Your names borne up with mortal breath,
 When length of time takes this away likewise,
 A second death shall you surprise.

We have seen how graphically King Alfred emphasized the argument of Philosophy on the momentary character of the longest life of man here on earth, when contrasted with infinity. In this Metre Philosophy points out the minuteness of the area which is influenced by the fame of the greatest men, when it is contrasted with the universe. Alfred gives us this in vigorous prose :

'Whosoever wisheth to have idle renown and useless vainglory, let him behold on the four sides of him and see how spacious is the vault of heaven, and how strait the spread of earth, though it seem to us so broad. Then he may be ashamed of the extent of his own fame, being unable even to spread it over this narrow earth. . . . Death giveth no heed to high birth, but swalloweth up mighty and lowly alike, and so bringeth both great and small to one level.'

Boethius asked, by way of example of famous men, Where now lie the bones of the faithful Fabricius ? What is Brutus ; what the firm Cato ?

The name Fabricius suggested to the king the idea of a smith, and his thoughts passed to the typical smith of those early times. He had a tradition which eventually appeared in the Völundr Saga, the Tale of Völund, the great worker in metals. Fabricius disappears altogether. Brutus and Cato suffer postponement. 'Where,' the king asks, 'Where are the bones of the famous and wise goldsmith Weland ? I call him wise because the man of skill can never lose his cunning, and can no more be deprived of it than the sun may be

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moved from his station. Where are now Weland's bones, or who knoweth now where they are ?'

Then the mention of Brutus and Cato is taken up and enlarged :

'Where now is the famous and the bold Roman chief that was called Brutus and by his other name Cassius ; or the wise and steadfast Cato that was also a Roman leader and well known as a sage ? Did they not die long ago, and not a man knoweth where they are ?'

Then the king returns to his text, but still adds to it freely :

'What is there left of them but a meagre fame, and a name writ with a few letters ? And worse still, we know of many famous men, and worthy of remembrance, now dead, of whom but few have any knowledge. Many lie dead and utterly forgotten, so that even fame is not able to make them known.'

"Some there be," he might have prophetically quoted from the Commemoration Services of the University which he would have been greatly surprised to hear that he had founded, "some there be which have no memorial."

The Lay naturally agrees with the prose rendering of the Metre (Dr. Sedgefield, p. 193) :

ii. m. 7.

Where now the wise one's,	Weland's bones,
The worker in gold,	once greatest in glory ?
I ask where the bones	of Weland are buried ;
For never any	that on earth liveth
May lose any virtue	lent him by Christ ;
Nor may one poor wretch	be robbed with more ease
Of his soul's virtue,	than may the sun
Be swung from his path,	or the swift heavens
Moved from their courses	by the might of a man.
Who now is aware	of wise Weland's bones,
In what barrow lying	they litter the ground ?

The king's question, Where are the bones of Weland ? Who knoweth where they be ? is curious. Within sight of the Uffington White Horse, on the actual down where many believe that the king fought the great fight of Assandun, within a walk of the quaint place of Ashdown, built by the silver knight of the Winter Queen, and within a walk of the ancient earth-work always known as Alfred's Camp, there

is a compact clump of trees, very visible from the Great Western Railway, in which there are remains of great antiquity. By tradition which has not as yet been traced to its origin, this is known in the neighbourhood as Weyland Smith's Cave. It is clear that Weland had long been dead in Alfred's time, and also that it was not known where his bones were, a different question from where his bones were originally buried. It is worth while to suggest that Alfred found Weland's grave near the White Horse partially destroyed, and the bones gone. 'In what barrow lying?' as his Lay pertinently asked.

The change of the name "Fabricius" into 'the famous and wise goldsmith Weland' is so remarkable that some digression is called for.

The Sagas, or saws, old stories, of the Elder Edda are understood to have been collected by an Icelander, Saemund Sigfus-son, who was born about A.D. 1060. The Younger Edda was a hundred years later. The Elder Edda is in verse, the Younger in prose, showing the natural priority of verse over prose in those times of bardic recitations.

One of the poetic saws of the *Elder Tales of a Grand-mother*¹ is the Völundar-kvitha, the queathing or story of Völund, Völundr (Norse), Wieland (German), Weland or Welond (Anglo-Saxon), Wayland Smith (more modern), a famous worker in iron and precious metals. Wayland Smith's Cave, as we have seen, is on the Berkshire Downs, near the White Horse and, like it, on the estate of the Earl of Craven of Ashdown Park, near by. We have "Weland's smithy" in a charter of King Eadred in the year 955. An earlier mention of Weland than this by Alfred occurs in Beowulf, where the hero is arranging his affairs in case his fight with Grendel should end fatally for him. Special instruction is given about his corslet, for it was of special value, the work of Weland.

On the great cross now in the parish church of Leeds, we have the effigy of Weland carrying off a woman high above his head. She has wings attached to a rope round her waist. There are in a corner of the panel bellows, anvil, pincers, hammer, the smith's tools. The Völundr Saga tells of his catching a swan-maiden bathing with her wings off, and carrying her away and keeping her as his wife for nine years. On a cross in the churchyard of Halton in Lancashire

¹ It is said that *Edda* means a great-grandmother.

and on the Franks' eighth-century casket of walrus ivory, we have graphic representations of Völund, ham-strung, killing the two sons of the king who kept him at work on an island, and giving strong drink to their sister, to make her submit to him, in a cup made from a brother's skull. Völund's brother is shown catching large birds, from whose feathers he made wings with which Völund escaped.

The Saga puts this part of Völund's very graphically. The king had possessed himself of Völund's sword, and of the rings he so greatly prized, especially one that his swan-wife had worn. This ring the king had given to his daughter Bödvild. The queen had noticed the wrathfulness of Völund's eyes when he saw the sword at the king's waist and the ring on Bödvild's finger. It was she who advised the king to have Völund hamstrung :

His teeth he shows
and Bödvild's ring
Threaten his eyes
Let be severed

when the sword he sees
he recognizes.
as a glittering serpent.
his sinews' strength.

That might be one of Alfred's Lays, with the double ictus. The metre changes to a threefold and fourfold ictus in describing the condition of Völund's mind :

The sword I whetted skilfully
and tempered it most cunningly
for ever it is taken from me
nor shall I see it in the smithy.

And Bödvild wears
my consort's red-gold rings.
He sat, and never slept,
but still the hammer plied,
and vengeance he devised.

Thus this mention of Weland by Alfred, the "cave" being on the site of one of his earliest battles, is of the highest interest to us. It is not a "cave," nor a covered trench. It was no doubt a burial-place for some one of distinction. The appearance of a trench leading to a grave is produced by making a narrow avenue of large irregular blocks of stone, set on the surface of the ground, and heaping up earth against their outer sides, thus burying them up to their tops and giving the appearance of a trench in a mound. At the far end of this trench or avenue are two tall upright stones

on either side, marking the entrance to the chambered grave itself, a continuance of the trenched mound, covered with large flagstones. Smaller stones were set up all round the mound, to keep the heaped-up earth from being washed down. This appears to be exactly the method of construction of a cairn at Clava, sections of which are shown in Mr. Fraser's "Notes on the Stone Circles of Strathnairn and the Neighbourhood of Inverness," *Soc. Ant. Scot.*, xviii. 341. It was clearly in the origin a neolithic burial. The alignment is towards the north-east. It has often been dug into, probably in search of treasure. As we have suggested above, Alfred visited it as the place where the great traditionary smith had been buried in a burial-place already ancient, and found it rifled and the bones gone.

Fabricius, whom Weland displaced, is worthy of a note :

Pyrrhus the King of Epirus offered Fabricius (Caius Luscinus, Consul 282 B.C.) the fourth part of his kingdom if he would desert his country, Rome. The physician Timochares offered him a bribe to poison Pyrrhus ; he handed Timochares over to Pyrrhus, who declared it was a harder business to turn the sun from his course than to turn Fabricius from honesty, *Fabricium difficilius ab honestate quam solem a suo cursu averti*. Claudian wrote (*Carm.* xxvi. 130) :

*et nulli pervia culpæ
Pectora Fabricii donis invicta vel armis.*

CHAPTER VIII

PROSE III. 1—METRE III. 9

The search for True Happiness—Metre iii. 1—The Supreme Good—False happiness—Supposed pleasures—Metre iii. 7—Prose iii. 8—Five elements of True Happiness—Metre iii. 9.

THE Third Book of Boethius enters upon a fresh subject—the search for, and the nature of, True Happiness.

In the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, there is a manuscript copy of *De Consolatione* which the Nasmyth Catalogue of the Library describes as *codex seculo ix scriptus*. This MS. was described by W. W. Skeat and J. W. Bright in the *American Journal of Philology*, vol. v, no. 4. Dr. Skeat gave the tenth century as the date of the MS. There is an interlinear Anglo-Saxon gloss, beginning at the Third Book, which Dr. Skeat attributed to the eleventh century. His conclusion on one point, which he says it was highly desirable to determine, is evidently sound; the glosses are not in any way connected with Alfred's translation. There is a curious mistake in the third word of the gloss. The Latin Prose begins with the words *JAM CANTUM ILLA FINIVERAT*, she had finished that song, namely Metre 8 of Book II. In the large black letter of the Latin script it is possible—and indeed not difficult—to read *illa* as *uia*, and so the glosser read it; he gives *weg*. We seem bound to suppose that, in defiance of the Latin construction, he imagined the meaning to be that song had ended its course.

The Mind assures Philosophy that it is now ready to receive those lessons which she had said were at the time too sharp and severe. Philosophy replies that she has felt that the Mind was becoming ready to receive these more advanced lessons. The medicine would seem bitter to the taste, but it would prove very soothing to the stomach. And if the Mind could know to what the medicine would lead, it would be inflamed with desire to receive it. It would lead to nothing less than True Happiness.

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But Philosophy would not be philosophy if it went straight to the positive point. It must first dispose of the negative. Philosophy therefore sings a charming song on the results of forsaking False Happiness.

iii. m. i. If you would have a fruitful field, you must first pluck up thorn and furze and fern. If you would have the full sweetness of honey, you should taste first something bitter. 'Calm weather,' Alfred interposes, 'is more grateful after north-west winds and great rain and snow.' The light of the day is more grateful because of the darkness of the night. 'So also is True Happiness far more delightful to possess after the miseries of this present life. Once get to know the true one, I know thou wilt desire nothing else before it.'

They then consult, discursively, on the Supreme Good, of which Alfred declares positively that it is no other than God. Philosophy runs through the usual list of what various men regard as real pleasures, and describes friendship as the most sacred thing, a heavenly blessing. This sets Alfred off on a long discussion of love for love's sake, and the union of friends.

True Friendship, Philosophy says, that most sacred thing, is rather to be attributed to virtue than to fortune, 'for,' Alfred inserts in the discussion, 'it is not false Fate that produces it, but God, who created natural friends in kinsmen. For every other thing in this world man desireth either because it will help him to power, or to get some pleasure, save only a true friend; him we love for love's sake and for our trust in him, though we can hope for no other return from him. Nature joins friends together and unites them with a very inseparable love; but by means of worldly goods and the wealth of this life we oftener make foes than friends. By these and many other reasons all men may be shown that all bodily excellences are inferior to the qualities of the soul.'

Men believe that they can gather together all that they regard as blessings, knowing no higher good than to get together in their own power the most valuable things, and thereby satisfy every need. 'But God only is without need, not man. God, being self-sufficing, needeth nothing besides what He hath in Himself.'

Are power, good report, fame, to be accounted nothing? No. How can that be evil which the mind of every man

thinketh good, and striveth after ? No poverty, nor hardship, sorrow, grief, melancholy, can be happiness. Happiness is the Highest Good, and yet nearly every one seeks it in that for which he craves, wealth, honours, authority, worldly splendour, vainglory, carnal pleasures. 'Men seek not the Highest Good by the straightest path, for that lieth not in this world.'

Inasmuch as riches had naturally found their place among the supposed pleasures, Philosophy returned to that ever-recurring subject in her Third Metre of this Book III. The succeeding Metres, 4 and 5, deal in like manner with sovereignty and with power. Alfred's renderings and discursiveness are very quaint, especially his remarks on the prominent Romans whom Boethius mentions.

Alike in Boethius's Latin and in Alfred's Anglo-Saxon translations and additions, very little is said of bodily excesses. Gluttony and drunkenness might almost have been unknown in Rome and in Wessex. Sexual relations are treated with a very light hand. The subject is touched in the Seventh Metre :

- iii. m. 7. Habet hoc voluptas omnis,
 Stimulis agit fruentes.
 All pleasure hath this property,
 She woundeth those who have her most.

The Lay (Dr. Sedgefield, p. 205) :

Alas ! that wrongful	unrighteous desire,
Frenzied lewdness	leadeth to this,
That of all mankind	it mazeth the mind,
Of each and all men,	wellnigh utterly.

iii. p. 8. Wilt thou live a voluptuous life ? But who would not despise and neglect the service of so vile and frail a thing as his body ? Now they who boast of the abilities of their body, upon how unsteadfast a possession do they ground themselves ! For can you be bigger than elephants, or stronger than bulls, or swifter than tigers ?

Look upon the space, firmness, and speedy motion, of the heavens, and cease somewhat to have in admiration base things. The heavens themselves are not to be admired for these qualities rather than for the mind, the reason, by which they are governed. The glittering of beauty, how fleeting it is, how swift to pass away, swifter than the passing

of spring flowers ! And if, as Aristophanes says, men had Lynceus's eyes, so that their keenness could penetrate anything that stood in the way, would they not judge that body of Alcibiades, seeming outwardly most fair, to be most foul and ugly by discovering his entrails ? Wherefore, not thy nature but the weakness of the beholder's eyes maketh thee seem fair.

King Alfred puts it thus :

'Wouldst thou enjoy overmuch carnal pleasure ? But God's good ministers will then forsake thee, for thy worthless flesh is thy lord, not thy servant. How can a man demean himself more pitiably than to make himself the thrall of his poor paltry flesh and not of his reasonable soul ? Though thou wert greater than the elephant, or stronger than the lion or the bull, or swifter than the beast we call tiger, and of all men fairest to behold ; yet if thou wouldst earnestly seek after wisdom until thou didst attain a perfect understanding thereof, then mightest thou plainly perceive that all the powers and qualities we have spoken of are not to be compared with one single quality of the soul. For instance, Wisdom is but a single quality of the soul, and yet we all know that it is better than all the other qualities we have mentioned.

'Behold the broad compass, the stability, and the swiftness of yonder heavens ; and then ye will be able to understand that they are nothing whatever, compared with their Creator and Ruler. Why then do ye not grow tired of admiring and praising what is of less account, namely, earthly riches ? As the heavens are better and loftier and fairer than all they contain, save only man, even so is man's body better and more precious than all his possessions. But how much better and more precious, thinkest thou, is the soul than the body ? Every creature is to be honoured in its due degree, and the highest is ever to be honoured most ; therefore the divine power should be honoured and admired and esteemed above all other things. Bodily beauty is very fleeting and very fragile, most like the flowers of the earth. A man might be as beautiful as Prince Alcibiades was ; but if another were as keen of sight as to be able to see through him—Aristotle the philosopher said there was a beast that could see through every thing, trees, yea even stones, this beast we call the lynx—if, I say, this man were so sharp-sighted as to be able to see through the other we spoke of, he should think

him by no means so fair inside as he seemed without. Thou mayest seem fair to men, but it is not any the truer for that ; the dullness of their sight hinders them from perceiving that they see the outside of thee, not the inside.'

Having considered and condemned the elements of False Happiness, Philosophy points out that it is now time to state the terms of True Happiness. This is to be done very simply, by stating the contraries of the five elements of False Happiness. Philosophy bids her scholar state them.

If I be not deceived, Boethius replies, that is true and perfect happiness which maketh a man independent, potent, respected, renowned, joyous ; these five in combination.

Happy thou art in this conviction, Philosophy says, if thou addest one thing.

B. What is that ?

Ph. Is there aught of perishable and mortal things that can give this ?

B. Nay, surely not.

Ph. Thou shouldst learn from what source to obtain it.

B. To that I have long been eagerly looking forward.

Ph. Plato in the *Timæus* maintains that even in the most trivial matters we ought to implore Divine help. What, then, thinkest thou we should do to secure this great gift ?

B. We must invoke the Father of all things.

Ph. Thou sayest well,

Forthwith she raised her voice and sang :

iii. m. 9. O Thou that dost the world in lasting order guide ; a noble Metre of twenty-eight long lines.

It is evident that at almost every point of this, Alfred's nimble and religious mind would suggest to him developments, above all a repeated assertion that the real aim, as the real author, is God.

CHAPTER IX

METRE III. 9

Plato's *Timæus*—The schools of France in Alfred's time—Metre iii. 9 in the Latin—In English verse—Dr. Jowett's translation of the *Timæus*—The creation of the universe—In the form of a globe, without feet or hands—The creation of souls, with sensations—Transmigration of souls—The creation of man by the younger gods—The four elements in the universe—Extracts from the notes of Remigius on this part of the *De Consolatione*—Alfred's prose rendering of this Metre, preferable to Plato and Remigius.

WE must dwell at some length on the very noble Metre, to which, as we saw at the end of Chapter viii, the mention of the *Timæus* of Plato served as an introduction. In it Boethius clothes in fine language many of the complicated points of Plato's Dialogue, the *Timæus*. Some of us think it at least one of the philosopher's greatest poetical successes. He is most felicitous in his choice of subjects from the *Timæus*, which Dr. Jowett frankly describes¹ as of all the writings of Plato the most obscure and repulsive to the modern reader. Boethius omits all points of the dialogue to which the epithet "repulsive" could possibly apply; and Alfred in turn omits from Boethius all that could be properly called "obscure."

King Alfred expands the twenty-eight hexameter lines into five closely printed pages of prose. Of course, the expansion consists of the inclusion of one detail after another of the original dialogue. He clearly had before him the dialogue in the Latin translation current in his time, when it was the subject of what we should call professorial lectures in the schools of France; quite possibly also in the schools Alfred had established here, with teachers from France. The more we examine the *Timæus* itself, and the contemporary notes of Alfred's own time, which by a rare chance we possess,² the more grateful we are to the king for the unerring tact with which he kept clear of the queernesses of dialogue and notes alike, and provided for us a long expansion of simple and high dignity and of profound reverence.

¹ *Dialogues of Plato*, iii. 523-676.

² See pages 383-390.

We must first give the actual Metre :

iii. m. 9.

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas,
 Terrarum caelique sator qui tempus ab aevo
 Ire jubes stabilisque manens das cuncta moveri,
 Quem non externae pepulerunt fingere causae
 Materiae fluitantis opus, verum insita summi
 Forma boni livore carens, tu cuncta superno
 Ducis ab exemplo, pulchrum pulcherrimus ipse
 Mundum mente gerens similique in imagine formans
 Perfectasque jubens perfectum absolvere partes.
 Tu numeris elementa ligas ut frigora flammis
 Arida conveniunt liquidis, ne purior ignis
 Evolet aut mersas deducant pondera terras.
 Tu triplicis mediam naturae cuncta moventem
 Connectens animam per consona membra resolvis.
 Quae cum secta duos motum glomeravit in orbes,
 In semet reditura meat mentemque profundam
 Circuit et simili convertit imagine caelum.
 Tu causis animas paribus vitasque minores
 Provehis et levibus sublimes curribus aptans
 In caelum terramque seris quas lege benigna
 Ad te conversas reduci facis igne reverti.
 Da pater augustam menti conscendere sedem,
 Da fontem lustrare boni, da luce reperta
 In te conspicuos animi defigere visus.
 Dissice terrenae nebulas et pondera molis
 Atque tuo splendore mica ! Tu namque serenum,
 Tu requies tranquilla piis, te cernere finis,
 Principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus idem.¹

We shall take both Stewart and Rand and Mr. H. R. James as our poetic translators of this great poem. We cannot have too much of its beauty. First, Stewart and Rand :

O Thou, that dost the world in lasting order guide,
 Father of heaven and earth, Who makest time swiftly slide,
 And, standing still Thyself, yet fram'st all moving laws,
 Who to Thy work wert moved by no external cause :
 But by a sweet desire, where envy hath no place,
 Thy goodness moving Thee to give each thing his grace,

¹ Stewart and Rand naturally refer us for a parallel to this effective ending to the closing words of Boethius *De Fide catholica*, on their seventieth page : *gaudium, delectatio, cibis, opus, laus.*

Thou dost all creatures' forms from highest patterns take,
 From Thy fair mind the world fair like Thyself didst make.
 Thus Thou perfect the whole perfect each part dost frame.
 Thou temp'rest elements, making cold mixed with flame
 And dry things join with moist, lest fire away should fly,
 Or earth, opprest with weight, buried too low should lie.
 Thou in consenting parts fitly disposed hast
 Th' all-moving soul in midst of threefold nature placed.
 Which, cut in several parts that run a different race,
 Into itself returns, and circling doth embrace
 The highest mind, and heaven with like proportion drives.
 Thou with like cause dost make the souls and lesser lives,
 Fix them in chariots swift, and widely scatterest
 O'er heaven and earth ; then at Thy fatherly behest
 They stream, like fire returning, back to Thee, their God.
 Dear Father, let my mind Thy hallowed seat ascend,
 Let me behold the spring of grace and find Thy light,
 That I on Thee may fix my soul's well cleared sight,
 Cast off the earthly weight wherewith I am opprest,
 Shine as Thou art most bright, Thou only calm and rest
 To pious men whose end is to behold Thy ray,
 Who their beginning art, their guide, their bound, and way.

Then Mr. H. R. James, less elliptic, a fuller version, very thorough :

Maker of earth and sky, from age to age
 Who rul'st the world by reason ; at whose word
 Time issues from Eternity's abyss :
 To all that moves the source of movement, fixed
 Thyself and moveless. Thee no cause impelled
 Extrinsic this proportioned frame to shape
 From shapeless matter ; but, deep-set within
 Thy inmost being, the form of perfect good,
 From envy free ; and Thou didst mould the whole
 To that supernal pattern. Beauteous
 The world in Thee thus imaged, being Thyself
 Most beautiful. So Thou the work didst fashion
 In that fair likeness, bidding it put on
 Perfection through the exquisite perfectness
 Of every part's contrivance. Thou dost bind
 The elements in balanced harmony,
 So that the hot and cold, the moist and dry,
 Contend not ; nor the pure fire leaping up

Escape, or weight of waters whelm the earth.
 Thou joinest and diffusest through the whole,
 Linking accordantly its several parts,
 A soul of threefold nature, moving all.
 This, cleft in twain, and in two circles gathered,
 Speeds in a path that on itself returns,
 Encompassing mind's limits, and conforms
 The heavens to her true semblance. Lesser souls
 And lesser lives by a like ordinance
 Thou sendest forth, each to its starry car
 Affixing, and dost strew them far and wide
 O'er earth and heaven. These by a law benign
 Thou biddest turn again, and render back
 To Thee their fires.

Oh, grant, almighty Father,
 Grant us on reason's wing to soar aloft
 To heaven's exalted height ; grant us to see
 The fount of good ; grant us, the true light found,
 To fix our steadfast eyes in vision clear
 On Thee. Disperse the heavy mists of earth,
 And shine in Thine own splendour. For Thou art
 The true serenity and perfect rest
 Of every pious soul, to see Thy face,
 The end and the beginning, One the guide,
 The traveller, the pathway, and the goal.

In order to form a correct idea of King Alfred's remarkable expansion of this Metre, we must have fresh in our mind the actual wording of the dialogue on which the Metre is based, the *Timæus* of Plato, as we have it in Dr. Jowett's translation already referred to. The creation of the universe is the subject. The universe is spoken of as animal, and is called the world.

"The creation took up the whole of each of the four elements ; for the Creator compounded the world out of all the fire and all the water and all the air and all the earth, leaving no part of any of them nor any power of them outside. He intended, in the first place, that the animal should be as far as possible a perfect whole and of perfect parts, and should be one, leaving no remnants out of which another such world might be created ; and also that he should be free from old age and unaffected by disease. Considering that heat and cold and other powerful forces which unite

bodies are apt to surround and attack them from without when they are unprepared, and by bringing diseases and old age upon them, make them to dissolve and die—for this cause and on these grounds he fabricated the world whole and of all the elements entire—and therefore perfect and not liable to old age and disease. And he gave to the world the figure which is suitable and also natural. Now to the animal which was to comprehend all animals, that figure was suitable which comprehends within itself all other figures. Wherefore he made the world in the form of a globe. . . . This he finished all round, and made the outside quite smooth for many reasons ; in the first case, because eyes would have been of no use to the living being when there was nothing remaining without him, or which could be seen ; and there would have been no use in ears when there was nothing to be heard ; nor was there any surrounding atmosphere to be breathed ; nor would there have been any use of implements by the help of which he might receive his food or get rid of what he had already digested ; for there was nothing which came from him or came to him, since there was nothing at all beside him. Nourishment was provided by him to himself through his own waste, and all that he did or suffered was done in himself and by himself, according to art. For the Creator conceived that a being which was self-sufficient would be far more excellent than one which lacked anything ; and as he had no need to take anything or defend himself against any one he had no need of hands, and the Creator did not think it necessary to furnish him with them when he did not want them ; nor had he any need of feet, nor of the whole apparatus of walking ; but he assigned to him the motion appropriate to his spherical form, being of all the seven ¹ that which is most appropriate to mind and intelligence ; and so he made him move in the same manner and on the same spot, within his own limits revolving in a circle. All the other six motions ¹ he took away from him, and made him not liable to be affected by them. And as the circular movement needed no feet, he made the universe without feet or legs.

“Such was the whole scheme of the eternal God about the god that was to be, to whom he for all these reasons gave a body, smooth, even, and in every direction equidistant

¹ The other six are backwards and forwards, right and left, up and down.—*Tim.* 625.

from a centre, entire and perfect, and formed out of perfect bodies. And in the centre he put the soul, which he diffused through the whole, and also spread over all the body round about ; and he made one solitary and only heaven, a circle moving in a circle, having such excellence as to be able to hold converse with itself, and needing no other friendship or acquaintance. Having these purposes in view he created the world a blessed god. . . . He made the soul in origin and excellence prior to and older than the body, to be the ruler and mistress, of whom the body was to be the subject.”¹

We then come to the human soul and body, continuing to quote from Dr. Jowett's translation of *Timæus*, 624-628.

“Once more and in the same manner he [the God already spoken of] poured the remains of the elements into the cup in which he had previously mingled the soul of the universe, no longer, however, pure as before, but diluted to the second and third degree. Having made it, he divided the whole mixture into souls equal in number with the stars, and assigned each soul to a star ; and having there placed them as in a chariot, he showed them the nature of the universe, and the appointment of destiny, telling them that their first birth would be one and the same for all, that no one shall suffer at his hands ; and that when they were sown in the vessels of time severally appointed to them, from them would come forth the most religious of animals ; and as human nature was of two kinds, the superior race would hereafter be called man.

“Now, as they were implanted in bodies by necessity, and were always gaining or losing some part of their bodily substance, in the first place there was a necessity that they should have sensation, and should all be affected in the same manner by external force ; in the second place they must have love, which is a mixture of pleasure and pain ; also fear and anger, and the feelings which are akin or opposite to them ; if they conquered these they would live righteously, and if they were conquered by them, unrighteously. He who lived well during his appointed time was to return to the star that was his habitation, and there he would have a pleased and suitable existence. But if he failed in attaining this, in the second generation he would pass into a woman,

¹ Plato's copy of the prescription or recipe on which the soul of the universe was made defies summarization, fortunately.

and should he not desist from evil in that condition, he would be changed into some brute who resembled him in his evil ways, and would not cease from his toils and transformations until he followed the original principle of sameness and likeness within him, and overcame by the help of reason the later accretions of turbulent and irrational elements composed of fire and air and water and earth, and returned to the form of his first and better nature. Having given all these laws to his creatures, that he might be guiltless of their future evil, the Creator sowed some of them in the earth, and some in the moon, and some in the other stars which are the vessels of time; and when he had sown them he committed to the younger gods the fashioning of their mortal bodies, and desired them to furnish what was still lacking to the human soul, and make all the suitable additions, and rule and pilot the mortal animal in the best and wisest manner which they could, and avert from him all but self-inflicted evils."

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We come now to ourselves, the inferior work of the younger gods. Plato—"still," as he says, "holding fast to probability"—tells that:

"First, then, the gods, imitating the spherical shape of the universe, enclosed the two divine courses in a spherical body—that, namely, which we now call the head, being the most divine part of us and the lord of all that is in us; to this the gods who put together the body gave all the other members to be servants, contriving that it should partake of every sort of motion. In order, then, that it might not tumble about among the deep and high places of the earth, but might be able to get out of the one and over the other, they provided the body to be its vehicle and means of locomotion; which consequently had length, and was furnished with four limbs extended and jointed; these the gods contrived as instruments of locomotion with which it might take hold and find support, and so be able to pass through all places, carrying on high the dwelling-place of the most sacred and divine part of us. Such was the origin of legs and arms, which were therefore attached to every man; and the gods, esteeming the front part of man as being more honourable and having more authority than the hinder part, they gave men mostly a forward motion.

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"Now it was necessary that man should have his front part distinguished, and unlike the rest of his body. Wherefore also about the vessel of the head, they first of all put a face in which they inserted organs to minister in all things to the providence of the soul, and to this anterior part they assigned a share of authority. And of the organs they first devised the eyes to give light, inserting them by a cause in the following manner. They contrived that so much of fire as would not have the power of burning but would only give a gentle light, the light of everyday life, should be formed into a body; and the pure fire which is within us and akin thereto they made to flow through the eyes in a smooth undivided and uninterrupted stream, especially at the centre of the eye."

"The sight," Plato says, "is in my opinion of the greatest benefit to us. Had the eyes never seen the stars and the sun and the heaven, none of the words we have spoken about the universe could ever have been uttered. But now the sight of day and night, the revolutions of months and years, have given us the invention of number and a conception of time, and the power of inquiring about the nature of the whole; and from this source we have derived Philosophy, than which no greater good ever was or will be given by the gods to mortal man."

Of the four elements mentioned by Plato in the composition of the universe, he speaks later as follows:

"That which we are now calling water, when congealed, becomes stone and earth, as our sight seems to show us; and the same element when melted and dispersed passes into vapour and air. And again, when burnt up, becomes fire; and again fire, when condensed and extinguished, passes once more into the form of air; and once more air, when collected and condensed, produces cloud and vapour; and from these when still more compressed, comes flowing water; and from water comes earth and stones once more; and thus generation appears to be transmitted from one to the other in a circle."

It may be well to quote here some extracts from the notes of Remigius which are printed in the Appendix to this account of Alfred's *Boethius*. They will show that if Alfred had any such notes before him, he exercised admirable judgment in abstaining from incorporating them in his work. It seems doubtful whether Remigius understood the passage

(lines 13, 14) which speaks of the soul as *in the midst* of a triple nature.

"*Mediam animam*. The soul is called "middle," not because it comes from the middle of the body, that is, the navel, but because its seat is properly in the heart, where is the pontificate of life. Or it is surely called "middle" because the soul is midway between the soul of beasts and the spirit of angels. For every spirit either is covered with flesh and with the flesh dies; or with the flesh does not die; or neither is covered with flesh nor dies. The soul of beasts is covered with flesh and dies with the flesh; the soul of men is covered with flesh, but does not die with the flesh; the spirit of angels is not covered with flesh and does not die. To more prudent interpreters it appears that by the middle soul is meant the reasonable soul, which has great concord with the world; whence the Greeks call man a microcosm, that is, a lesser world. For as the world consists of four elements and four seasons, so man consists of four humours and four impulses.

"Let us see the concord of the world and man. There are four elements, air, fire, water, earth. Air is warm and moist; spring is warm and moist. The blood in the boy is warm and moist, for boyhood is warm and moist. Fire is warm and dry; summer is warm and dry. The ruddy bile¹ which abounds in adolescence is warm and dry, for adolescence is warm and dry. Earth is cold and dry; autumn is cold and dry. Melancholy, that is the black bile which is in middle-aged² men, is cold and dry, for middle age is cold and dry. Water is cold and moist; winter is cold and moist; the phlegm which abounds in old men is cold and moist; old age is cold and moist.

"That world³ has a soul of triple nature, for it has the qualities of anger, desire, reason. Anger, that it may be wrathful with vice and bodily pleasure; desire, that it may love God and seek after virtue; reason, that it may discern between creator and creature, good and evil. If these three

¹ My friend Sir Norman Moore tells me that certain Commentaries on the Aphorisms of Boerhaave suggest that what we should call hæmorrhages from the mucous membrane of the bowel were regarded as red bile, and Bruno's Lexicon (in 1682) under *bilis pallida*, has *huc contraria est rubra*.

² The Latin is *juventus*, which the dictionaries give as from twenty to forty. It is followed here by *senectus*. Hippocrates, Sir Norman Moore tells me, says that black bile dominates between twenty-five and forty-five years of age.

³ Man has just before been described as "a microcosm, that is, a lesser world." The text here no doubt refers back to that.

are reasonably preserved they unite the creature to the Creator. But if they suffer change, they enfeeble the mind. For if that quality be corrupted which is called anger, the man becomes gloomy, rancid, full of the gall of bitterness. If that quality which is called desire be vitiated, the man becomes drunken, lustful, a slave of pleasures. But if that quality be corrupted which is called reason, the man becomes haughty, heretic, subject to all vices."

Those three paragraphs show us that Remigius's lecture-notes brought some of the queerest parts of the *Timæus* before the schools of France. Let us now see how our Anglo-Saxon King treated this curious collection of queernesses.

Mr. Fox¹ renders Alfred's expansion of the metre as follows :

'O Lord, how great and how wonderful thou art ! Thou who all thy creatures visible and invisible wonderfully hast created, and rationally governest them ! Thou who times from the beginning of the middle earth to the end, settest in order, so that they both depart and return ! Thou who all moving creatures according to thy will movest, and thou thyself always fixed and unchangeable remainest ! For none is mightier than thou, nor any like thee. No necessity taught thee to make that which thou hast made, but by thine own will and by thine own power thou madest all things, though thou didst need none of them. Very wonderful is the nature of thy good, for it is all one, thou and thy goodness. Good is not come to thee from without, but it is thine own. But to us, all that we have of good in this world is come to us from without, that is, from thee. Thou hast no envy to anything, because no one is more skilful than thou, nor any like thee ; for thou by thy sole counsel hast designed and wrought all good. No man set thee an example, for no one was before thee who anything or nothing might make.² But thou hast made things very good and very fair, and thou thyself art the highest good and the fairest. As thou thyself didst design, so hast thou made this middle earth and dost govern it as thou wilt ; and thou thyself dost distribute all good as thou wilt. And thou hast made all creatures like each other and also in some respects unlike. Though thou hast named all these thy creatures with one name, and hast joined them all together and called them the world, yet that

¹ A.D. 1864. Bohn's Libraries, 1909, pp. 129-133.

² Do or leave undone.

one name thou hast divided into four elements. One of these is earth ; another, water ; the third, air ; the fourth, fire. To every one of them thou hast set its own separate place, and yet every one is with other classed, and peaceably bound by thy commandment, so that no one of them should pass over another's boundary, and the cold suffer by the heat, and the wet by the dry. The nature of earth and of water is cold ; the earth is dry and cold, and the water wet and cold. The air is distinguished ; it is either cold, or wet, or warm. It is no wonder ; because it is created in the midst between the dry and cold earth and the hot fire. The fire is uppermost over all these worldly creatures.

‘Wonderful is thy counsel which thou hast in both respects accomplished ; thou hast bounded the creatures and also hast intermixed them, the dry and cold earth under the cold wet water, that the soft and flowing water may have a floor on the firm earth, for it cannot of itself stand, but the earth holds it and in some measure imbibes, and by that moistening it becomes wet, so it grows, and blossoms, and produces fruits. For if the water moistened it not, then it would become dry, and would be driven by the wind like dust or ashes. Nor could any living thing enjoy the earth, or the water, or dwell in either, on account of cold, if thou didst not a little mix them with fire. With wonderful skill thou hast caused it, that the fire burns not the water and the earth when it is mixed with both : nor again the water and the earth entirely extinguish the fire. The water's own region is on the earth, and also in the air and again above the sky. But the fire's own place is above all visible worldly creatures ; and though it is mixed with all elements, nevertheless it cannot altogether overcome any one of the elements, because it has not the leave of the Almighty. The earth, then, is heavier and thicker than other elements, because it is lower than any other creature except the sky ; for the sky extends itself every day outside the earth yet never touches it, and is everywhere equally near to it above and beneath.

‘Every one of the elements we have named has its own region apart, and yet is every one mixed with other ; because no one of the elements can exist without another, though it be imperceptible in the other. Thus water and earth are very difficult to be seen or to be perceived by ignorant men in fire, and yet they are nevertheless mixed therewith. So

is there also fire in stones, and in water ; very difficult to be seen, but it is nevertheless there. Thou hast bound the fire with very indissoluble chains, that it may not come to its own region, that is, to the greatest fire that is over us ; lest it should forsake the earth, and all other creatures should perish by excessive cold if it should altogether depart. Thou hast established earth very wonderfully and firmly, so that it does not incline on any side, nor stand on any earthly things, nor does anything earthly hold it that it may not sink ; and it is not easier for it to fall downwards than upwards.'

We must break the sequence of the statement here to note a point which appears to have a direct bearing on the question of the priority of the prose or the Lay rendering of the Metre.

The prose passes straight on from the point we have reached to the paragraph on page 343, beginning ' I said that the soul was threefold.' The Lay makes an insertion of some lines, setting forth the apposite and practical simile of the egg.

Professor Earle, in his essay on " King Alfred as a Writer " in the collection of Essays published in 1899,¹ renders it thus :

Likest in fashion	to how in an egg
Middlemost the yoke	and withal gliding free
The egg round about.	So standeth the world
Still in its place,	while streaming around
Water-floods play,	welkin and stars
And the shining shell	circleth about
Day by day now	as it did long ago.

Now the curious fact is that Professor Earle remarks, There is this much found in the scholia—" That the sky and the earth and the sea are in configuration like an egg." It will appear to any one who has really studied King Alfred and his ways quite safe to say that if he had known or had thought of this simile of the egg when he was making the prose rendering of the Metre, he would certainly have used it. The clear deduction is that we have here the evidence that the statement in the Proem is literally correct so far as the Metres are concerned : When King Alfred ' had studied this book and turned it from Latin into English prose, he

¹ *Alfred the Great* (A. and C. Black), p. 185.

wrought it up once more into verse, as it is now done.' This is also a strong argument in favour of the Alfredian authorship of the Lays; and it appears to show that after the prose rendering was complete the King continued to study the book, and sought and found further aid from fresh sources, making the Lays a second edition.

To resume :

'I said that the soul was threefold, because philosophers say that she has three natures. One of these natures is that she has the power of willing; the second is that she is subject to anger; the third is that she has reason. Two of these natures beasts have, the same as men; one of them is will, the other is anger; but man alone has reason, and not any other creature. Therefore he has excelled all earthly creatures by thought and by understanding; for reason should govern both will and anger, because it is the peculiar faculty of the soul. So hast thou created the soul that she should always turn upon herself, as all the sky turns, or as a wheel turns round, inquiring about her Maker, or about herself, or about these earthly creatures. When she inquires about her maker, then is she above herself. But when she inquires about herself, then is she in herself. And she is beneath herself when she loves these earthly things and admires them. Thou, O Lord, hast given to souls a dwelling in the heavens, and on them thou bestowest worthy gifts, to every one according to its deserving; and causest them to shine very bright, and yet with very varied brightness, some brighter, some less bright, even as the stars, every one according to its desert. Thou, O Lord, bringest together the heavenly souls and the earthly bodies, and unitest them in this world. As they from thee came hither, so shall they also to thee hence tend. Thou filledst this earth with various kinds of animals, and afterwards didst sow it with various seeds of trees and plants.

'Grant now, O Lord, to our minds, that they may ascend to thee through the difficulties of this world, and from these occupations come to thee; and that with the open eyes of our mind we may see the noble fountain of all goods. That art thou! Grant to us, then, sound eyes of our mind, that we may fix them on thee; and drive away the mist that now hangs before the eyes of our mind, and enlighten the eyes with thy light; for thou art the brightness of the true light, and thou art the quiet rest of the just, and thou wilt cause

that they shall see thee. Thou art the beginning and the end of all things. Thou supportest all things without labour. Thou art both the way and the guide and the place the way leads to. All men tend to thee !'

Surely we are entitled to say that Alfred is better reading than Plato or Remigius ?

CHAPTER X

PROSE III. 12—METRE IV. 3

Alfred's use of the stories of classical mythology—The Giants—The Highest Good—Parables—Orpheus and the loss of Eurydice—His successes in the infernal regions—Cerberus, Charon, the Parcæ, etc.—The king of hell's folk and his award—The moral of the story—Man, becoming evil, ceases to be a man—King Aulixes (Ulysses) and his thegns—Circe and her enchantments—Inversion of the moral of the fable.

At the end of the Third and the beginning of the Fourth Book we have a long-sustained and very interesting employment of the method of teaching by parables, the parables being taken from the fables of old time. It is unnecessary to say, at this stage of our inquiry, that Alfred would revel in showing his knowledge of these fables. A word of reference in *Boethius* would call to the mind of the reader in his day and country the whole story—as, for instance, Giants, Orpheus, Ulysses. Alfred would be sure to tell his people all about it; it was all new to them.

We can take the three examples mentioned, the Giants, Orpheus, Ulysses.

In Prose 12 of the Third Book, Philosophy is leading the Mind to recognize great truths concerning the creation and the government of the world.

iii. p. 12. Ph. We have proved that Sufficiency is Felicity, and Felicity is God?

M. It is as thou sayest.

Ph. God needs no help save Himself, for if He needed help He would not be self-sufficient?

M. It is as thou sayest.

Ph. By Himself He created and governeth all things?

M. I cannot gainsay that.

Ph. We have already shown that God is through Himself good?

M. I remember thou didst say so.

Ph. Through goodness God createth all things, and He

is alone the sure ruler, and guideth all creatures even as a good steersman does a ship.

M. 'Now I confess to thee that I have found a door, where before I saw but a little crack, so that I could only just spy a very little gleam of light from out this darkness. Thou didst show me the door, but I was none the abler to come to it, and I groped about it where I saw the little gleam twinkling. Thou hast now set all very plainly before me, as if thou hadst plucked open the door I had been seeking.'

Ph. There is no creature that thinks it must resist its Creator's will if it would be true to its nature ?

M. No creature wishes to resist its Creator's will 'save foolish man or the rebellious angels.'

Ph. There is nothing that is able or willing to gainsay so exalted a God ?

M. Nothing, excepting what we spoke of before.

Ph. *Accipisti in fabulis lacescentes cælum gigantes ; sed illos quoque, uti condignum fuit, benigna fortitudo disposuit.*

Thou hast heard in fables how the giants assaulted heaven, but beneficent strength disposed of them also as they deserved.

'Truly I know thou hast often heard in old fables how Job¹ son of Saturn, was the highest god above all other gods, and was son of the sky, and reigned in heaven ; and how there were giants, sons of the earth, who did rule over the earth, and how they were, so to speak, sisters' children, Jove being son of the sky and they sons of the earth. Now the giants were wroth that he had sway over them, and sought to burst the heavens beneath him. But he sent thunders and lightnings and winds, and scattered therewith all their handiwork, and themselves he slew. Such were the false stories they made up. They could easily have told true ones, and yet very like the others, if false ones had not seemed sweeter to them. They could have told what foolishness Nefrod² the giant wrought. He was son of Chus,³ Chus was son of Cham,⁴ Cham was son of Noe. Nefrod bade build a tower in the field called Sennar⁵ and among the folk called Deira,⁶ hard by the town which we now call Babylonia. This they did, for the reason that they wished to know how near it was to heaven, how thick and fast heaven was, and what was above it. But it fell out, as

¹ Jove.

⁴ Ham,

² Nimrod.

⁵ Shinar.

³ Cush.

⁶ Dura.

was fitting, that the divine might dashed them down before they could bring it to a head, and cast down the tower and many a man among them, and split their speech into two and seventy tongues. Thus it happens to all that strive against the might of God. Their honour grows not thereby, and that which they had before is lessened.'

Philosophy continues to discuss Happiness and the Highest Good, and to show that the Highest Good is God Himself, pointing out that the man is blessed who can see the clear well-spring of the Highest Good, casting off the darkness of his mind.

Ph. Do not wonder if we go on searching into that which we have taken in hand. We have to treat of many instances and parables, yet our mind cleaves all the while to that into which we are searching. 'We use not these instances and these parables from a love of fables, but because we desire therewith to show forth the truth, and would like it to be of profit to our hearers.' By the way, I call to mind a precept of Plato's, that a man who would use parables should not take those that are too foreign to the matter in hand. Now listen patiently to what I am about to sing :

iii. m. 12. *Felix qui potuit boni
Fontem visere lucidum
Felix qui potuit gravis
Terræ solvere vincula.*

"Happy he who can cast off the chains of earth and see clearly the fount of good."

'We must tell thee yet another of the fables of old':

*Quondam funera conjugis
Vates Threicius gemens
Postquam flebilibus modis
Silvas currere mobiles
Amnes stare coegerat.*

"In time of old, the Thracian poet, mourning the death of his wife, had compelled by his tearful strains the very woods to move and the rivers to stand still."

'Once upon a time a harp-player lived in the country called Thrace, which was in the kingdom of the Crecas. The harper was so good, it was quite unheard of. His name

was Orfeus, and he had a wife without her equal, named Eurudice. Now men came to say of the harper that he could play the harp so that the forest swayed and the rocks quivered for the sweet sound.'

Junxitque intrepidum latus
Saevis cerva leonibus,
Nec visum timuit lepus
Jam cantu placidum canem

"The hind stood side by side with savage lions, the hare feared not the hound now harmless from the melody."

'Wild beasts would run up and stand still as if they were tame, so still that men or hounds might come near them and they fled not. The harper's wife died, men say, and her soul was taken to hell. Then the harpman became so sad that he would not live in the midst of other men, but was off to the forest, and sate upon the hills both day and night, weeping and playing on his harp so that the woods trembled and the rivers stood still, and hart shunned not lion, nor hare hound, nor did any beast feel rage or fear towards any other for gladness of the music.'

Nec qui cuncta subegerant
Mulcerent dominum modi,
Immites superos querens
Infernas adiit domos

"The strains which had subdued all things had not power to soothe his grief. He left in despair the upper world and went to the world below."

'And when it seemed to the harper that nothing in this world brought joy to him, he thought he would seek out the gods of hell and essay to win them over with his harp and pray them to give him back his wife.'

Stupet tergeminus novo
Captus carmine janitor.

The three-headed porter is still
Caught by the novel song.

'When he came there, the hound of hell, they say, came to him, his name was Cerverus and he had three heads; and he began to welcome him with his tail and play with him on account of his harp-playing. There was there also a

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dreadful warder called Caron ; he, too, had three heads, and he was very old. Then the harper besought him to shield him while he was in that place, and bring him back unharmed. And he promised to do so, being overjoyed at the rare music.'

Quae sontes agitant metu
Ultrices scelerum deæ
Jam maestae lacrimis madent.

"The goddesses, avengers of evils, who rack with fear the guilty, now sorrowful are wet with tears."

'Then he went on farther until he met the fell goddesses that men of the people call *Parcæ*, saying that they know no respect for any man but punish each according to his deeds ; and they are said to rule each man's fate. And he began to implore their kindness, and they fell to weeping with him. Again he went on, and all the dwellers in hell ran to meet him, and fetched him to their king ; and all began to speak with him and join in his prayer.'

Non Ixionium caput
Velox præcipitat rota,
Et longa site perditus
Spernit flumina Tantalus
Vultur dum satur est modis,
Non traxit Tityi jecur.

"The swift wheel no longer whirls Ixion's head, and Tantalus, lost in long thirst, spurns the flowing water, and the vulture filled with the music drags not at Tityus's liver."

'And the ever-moving wheel that Ixion, King of the *Levitas*, was bound to for his guilt, stood still for his harping, and King Tantalus, that was in this world greedy beyond measure, and whom that same sin of greed followed there, had rest, and the vulture, it is said, left off tearing the liver of King Ticcus, whom he had thus been punishing. And all the dwellers in hell had rest from their tortures whilst he was harping before the king.'

Tandem, Vincimur, arbiter
Umbrarum miserans ait,
Donamus comitem viro
Emptam carmine conjugem.
Sed lex dona coerceat,

Ne, dum Tartara liquerit,
Fas sit lumina flectere.

"At length the ruler of the shades pitying, said, We yield, we give him the wife he has bought with his song. But on this condition, that he turn not his eyes while he is leaving our realm."

'Now when he had played a long long time, the King of hell's folk cried out, saying, Let us give the good man his wife, for he hath won her with his harping. Then he bade him be sure never to look back, once he was on his way thence ; if he looked back, he said, he should forfeit his wife.'

Quis legem det amantibus ?
Major lex amor est sibi.
Heu ! noctis prope terminos
Orpheus Eurydicen suam
Vidit, perdidit, occidit.

"Who shall give a law to lovers ? Love is their highest law. Alas ! at the very edge of hell, Orpheus saw, lost, killed his Eurydice."

'But love may hardly, nay cannot be denied. Alas and well-a-day ! Orpheus led his wife along with him, until he came to the border of light and darkness, and his wife was close behind. He had but stepped into the light when he looked back towards his wife, and immediately she was lost to him.

Vos hæc fabula respicit
Quicumque in superum diem
Mentem ducere quaeritis.
Nam qui Tartareum in specus
Victus lumina flexerit,
Quidquid præcipuum trahit
Perdit, dum videt inferos.

"This fable touches those who seek to lead their mind to higher things. If they are tempted and turn their eyes to the depths of Tartarus, they lose the best they have when they look into hell."

'These fables teach every man that would flee from the darkness of hell and come to the light of true goodness that he should not look towards his old sins, so as again to commit

them as fully as he once did. For whosoever with entire will turneth his mind back to the sins he hath left, and then doeth them and taketh full pleasure in them, and never after thinketh of forsaking them, that man shall lose all his former goodness, unless he repent.'

- 、 We may take one more example of parable, from Prose 3 and Metre 3 of the Fourth Book.

Philosophy speaks to the Mind.

iv. p. 3. Thou didst learn a little time since that whatever is, is one, and that oneness is in itself good. Accordingly, whatever falls away from goodness ceases to be. Whence it comes that the bad cease to be what they are, while only the outside remains to show that they have been men. By their perversion to badness they have lost their true human nature. And since righteousness alone can raise men above the level of humanity, it must needs be that unrighteousness degrades them below the level of humanity. It results that thou canst not consider him human whom thou seest transformed by vice. The secret schemer, taking pleasure in fraud and stealth, you may regard as a fox; the man phrensied with rage, as a lion; the coward, as a timid deer; the ignorant and stupid, as a dull ass; the man who wallows in lust, as a filthy hog. Alfred characteristically expands the filthy hog into 'fat swine that love always to lie in foul pools, and never care to wash themselves in clear water. When they are now and again made to bathe, they rush back afterwards to their filth and wallow in it.' Philosophy closes the Prose with the usual fillip. "So it comes to pass that the man who forsakes righteousness actually turns into a brute beast."

Boethius naturally sets Philosophy to chant a Metre from classical mythology which is evidently a parable akin to the matter in hand, as Plato said a parable ought to be. Mr. H. R. James renders this Metre, *Vela Neritii ducis*, so closely that we may dispense with the Latin quotations.

iv. m. 3. The Ithacan discreet
And all his storm-tossed fleet
Far o'er the ocean wave
The winds of heaven drave,
Drave to the mystic isle
Where dwelleth in her guile
That fair and faithless one
The daughter of the Sun.

Alfred opens thus: 'Philosophy began to sing again, and these were her words:

'I can from stories of old tell thee one that is very like unto what we are now discussing. Once upon a time, during the Trojan war, there lived, as it happened, a king named Aulixes¹ who held two countries under the Cæsar. These countries were called Ithacige² and Retie,³ and the Cæsar's name was Agamemnon. When Aulixes went with the Cæsar in the war he had several hundred ships, and they were fighting about ten years. And when the King came with the Cæsar homewards again, and they had conquered the land, he had no more than one ship, a three-banked galley. Then high winds and stormy seas beset him, and he was driven upon an island out in the Wendelsea.⁴ Now a daughter of Apollo, son of Job,⁵ dwelt there. Job was their king, and feigned that he was the highest god, and the silly people believed him, for he was of the kingly class, and in those days they knew no other god, but worshipped their kings for gods. Job's father was also said to be a god; his name was Saturnus, and each of his sons likewise they accounted a god. One of them was the Apollo we just now spoke of. Now Apollo's daughter was, men say, a goddess, whose name was Kirke' (Circe).

There for the stranger crew
With cunning spells she knew
To mix the enchanted cup.
For whoso drinks it up
Must suffer hideous change
To monstrous shapes and strange.

Alfred continues to expand.

'She was said to be mighty in witchcraft, and dwelt in the island upon which the king we spoke of was driven. There she had a very great company of her thanes, and also of other maidens. No sooner did she look upon the shipwrecked king we have mentioned, whose name was Aulixes, than she fell in love with him, and each loved the other beyond all reason, so that for love of her he gave up all his kingdom and his kindred. And he tarried with her so long that his thanes could no longer stay with him, but, yearning for home, and

¹ Ulysses.

² Ithaca (? island of Ithaca).

³ Rhætia.

⁴ The Mediterranean. See *Orosius*, p. 93—

⁵ Jove.

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being minded to punish him, resolved to leave him. Now makers of fables started to make up a story, and said she changed the men with her witchcraft, and turned them into the shapes of wild beasts, and then cast upon them chains and fetters.'

One like a boar appears ;
This his huge form uprears
Mighty in bulk and limb
An Afric lion, grim
With claw and fang ; confessed
A wolf, this, sore distressed
When he would weep doth howl ;
And, strangely tame, these prowl
The Indian tiger's mates.

'One, they say, she changed into a lion, and when he should have spoken, he roared. Some were boars and when they should have been bemoaning their woes they grunted. Some became wolves, and howled when they should have spoken. Some became the kind of beast we call tiger.'

Man's speech and form were reft,
No human feature left,
But steadfast still the mind,
Unaltered, unresigned,
Monstrous change bewailed.

'They had no likeness to men in body or in voice, yet each had his reason as he had before. Their reason was very sad for the miseries they were suffering. Now the men who believed these false tales knew that she could not with her witchcraft change men's minds, though she changed their bodies. Verily the power of the mind is great, when measured with that of the body. By such examples thou mayest perceive that the power of the body lieth in the mind, and every man is more harmed by the sins of his mind.'

That is Alfred's conclusion. It does not appear to be very pointed. The conclusion of Boethius in the *Metre* is that there are poisons worse than those of Circe ; the poisons, namely, which "leave the body whole, but deep infect the soul."

Curiously enough, the conclusion which Boethius makes

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the Mind draw in its response to the Metre amounts to an inversion of the terms of the fable. The fable urges that while the body is changed the mind is not. Boethius makes the Mind, or the Reason, say, "This is very true. I see that the vicious, while they keep the outward form of man, are rightly said to be changed into beasts in respect of their spiritual natures." Or as Alfred puts it, 'I grant that what thou saidst is true, namely, that it was not wrong to call men of wicked desires cattle or wild beasts, though they may have the likeness of men.'

CHAPTER XI

METRE IV. 2—METRE IV. 7

Metre iv. 2, kings stripped of their pomp—In modern English—In Alfred's prose expansion—In the largely expanded Lay—The Prose founded on it—Prose iv. 6, good and ill fortune—Six principal heads—God disposes every thing and guides all for good—Professor Earle's rendering of Alfred's simile of the wheel (iv. p. 6)—Prose iv. 7, that all fortune is good fortune—Dialogue between Philosophy and the Mind—Alfred's long addition.

THE second Metre of Book IV, *Quos vides sedere celsos solii culmine reges*, "The kings whom we behold in highest glory placed," would naturally have a special attraction for King Alfred. His prose rendering, it will be seen, is full of embellishments and illustrations.

There is another reason for giving it in full. We have seen that the Lays have been a subject of much discussion, and that a close connexion exists between them and the expanded prose renderings of the Latin Metres by Alfred. The Lay corresponding with Alfred's prose expansion of this second Metre of Book IV is a palmary example of this connexion. It amounts to a drawn battle between those who argue that the Lays are merely Alfred's expanded prose rendering of the Metre put into Anglo-Saxon verse, and those who argue that Alfred's prose expansion of the Metre is merely a rendering of the poetic Lay.

We may take first the remarkable expansions of the Latin Metre. The Metre is rendered thus by Stewart and Rand :

The kings whom we behold	In highest glory placed
And with rich purple graced,	Compassed with soldiers bold,
Whose countenance shows	Who with rash fury chide ;
fierce threats,	
If any strip the pride	From their vainglorious feats,
He'll see them close oppressed	Within by galling chains.
For filthy lust there reigns	And poisoneth their breast.
Wrath often them perplexeth	Raising their minds like waves.

Sorrow their power enslaves	And sliding hope them vexeth.
So many tyrants still	Dwelling in one poor heart,
Except they first depart	She cannot have her will.

Alfred turns the Metre into prose as follows :

‘Hear now a tale of over-proud and unrighteous kings. These we see seated on high seats. They are bright with many kinds of raiment, and are girt about with a great company of their thegns, who are decked with belts and golden-hilted swords and war-dress of many kinds, threatening all mankind with their grandeur. And he that ruleth them reckoneth no more of friend or foe than doth a mad hound, but is unspeakably uplifted in mind by reason of his boundless power. But if thou strip off his clothes, and take away from him his company of thegns, and his power, then shalt thou see that he is most like one of the thegns that minister unto him, if he be not even lower. And if it befall him that for a time he is reft of his servants, and his apparel, and his power, then it seemeth to him that he is brought to a dungeon or put in chains. For out of unmeet and inordinate apparelling, out of dainty meats and divers drinks, the raging frenzy of lewd desire awakeneth, and confoundeth men’s minds grievously. Then spring up also pride and frowardness ; and when they are swollen up, the mind is lashed by the surge of hot passion, until a man is bound about with gloom of soul, and held prisoner. When this hath come to pass, then the hope of revenge beginneth its lying tale to him, and his reckless mood promiseth whatsoever his passion craveth. I have already told thee in this very book that all creatures desire by their natures some good, but the unrighteous kings can do no good, for the reason I have just given thee. No marvel is it, for they put themselves in thralldom to all the sins I have already spoken of to thee. Such a one must obey the doom of those lords to whom he hath given himself over, and, what is worse, he will not even struggle against it. If he would but make a beginning, and should be unable afterwards to keep up the struggle, then would he bear no blame for it.’

Now we may turn to Dr. Sedgefield’s rendering of the Lay (p. 224) :

Hear now a tale	told of the proud ones,
The kings unrighteous	that rule o’er the earth,

That shine among us
 In many various
 On high seats raised
 Decked with gold,
 On all sides hemmed
 Of thegns and fighters.
 With battle harness
 With gleaming brands
 And with high state
 Obedient all ;
 To every quarter,
 All other nations
 And their lord heedeth,
 Friend nor foeman,
 But ruthless ever
 Unto a mad hound
 Too high uplifted
 For the dominion
 His friends so trusty,
 If a man, however,
 Each several garment
 And from him sever
 And likewise the power
 Then mightst thou see
 To one of the men
 Press about him
 He might well be worse,
 If such an one ever,
 Happened to lose
 State and raiment
 And the power also
 If any of such things
 I know he will fancy
 Deep in a dungeon,
 In shackles fastened.
 That from over-measure
 In food or in dress,
 Or in sweetmeats,
 The mighty frenzy
 That cloudeth sore
 Of every mortal.
 Evil pride of heart
 When rage is burning,

with wondrous sheen
 beautiful vestures,
 e'en to the roof,
 adorned with jewels,
 with a countless host
 These too are furnished
 of wondrous brightness,
 stoutly belted,
 they serve the other,
 and then, forth bursting
 crush with force
 that neighbouring dwell ;
 who the host ruleth,
 life nor fortune,
 rusheth on all men ;
 most hath he likeness,
 within his heart,
 that each of his darlings,
 aideth to found.
 might pluck from the tyrant
 of the royal garb,
 the various servants,
 that once he possessed,
 that he is most like
 that now most busily
 in painful service ;
 but I ween no better.
 all unwitting,
 by lack of fortune
 and ready service,
 which we have pictured :
 he seeth no longer,
 that he hath fallen
 or himself he deemeth
 This I may show,
 in any matter,
 or in wine-drinking,
 sorest waxeth
 of fierce desire
 the inmost spirit
 Thence come most often
 and profitless strife.
 within their bosoms

Their hearts are whelmed
 Of seething passion,
 Are gripped in turn
 Firmly caught.
 Hope deceitful
 Crying vengeance,
 More and more ;
 The heart so reckless,
 I told thee before
 That somewhat of good
 Of the wide creation
 By the natural power
 The unrighteous kings
 To no good ever
 By reason of the sin
 Nor is that a marvel,
 Themselves to abase,
 Of each of the evils
 Needs then straitly
 Unto the bondage
 The chieftains by them
 Yet is this worse,
 Resist this mastery
 If he were ready
 And the war thereafter
 Then were he never
 E'en if beaten,

with waves enormous
 and soon hereafter
 with grievous gloom,
 Anon there cometh
 with fateful lying
 for anger craveth
 then maketh promise
 of all right heedless.
 in this same book
 by each single member
 is ever craved,
 that it possesseth.
 that rule the earth
 can give an issue,
 whereof I have spoken ;
 for they ever are minded
 and bow to the power
 named already.
 they must submit
 of those masters,
 already chosen.
 that a man will not
 e'en for a moment.
 to begin to wrestle
 to wage for ever,
 worthy of blame
 bested at last.

We have described it as a drawn battle between those who argue that the Lay was prior to the prose rendering and those who argue that the Lay was based upon the prose rendering. But when we assume, as assume we must, that the author of each was bent upon expansion, we must take note of the fact that while the prose rendering is in itself an exceedingly bold and wide expansion on the original Latin Metre, the Lay not only follows the prose rendering in every detail of its expansion, but actually expands upon it. The Lay finds no foundation in the expanded prose rendering for the lines

life nor fortune,
 But ruthless ever rusheth on all men,
 or,
 that each of his darlings,
 His friends so trusty, aideth to found.

This, so far as it goes, points to the verdict "if drawn, drawn in favour of the priority of the prose rendering."

It is a curious and interesting fact that, while this Second Metre of Book IV is so very freely expanded by the Anglo-Saxon rendering, the rendering of the Prose which is founded upon it is most unusually free from expansion or alteration. With the exception of a simile of a golden crown at the end of a race-course, and an illustration that a man is not a perfect man if he has lost a limb, there is only one expansion in the whole of the three pages occupied by the Prose. And that although there is one fairly long passage in the Prose which must have made a man like Alfred burn with the desire to point a moral. Alfred, or his translator, held out against the temptation up to the last word, and then broke down.

This is the passage :

iv. p. 3. 'But even as men's goodness exalts them above the nature of men so that they are called gods, so also their wickedness drags them down beneath the nature of man, so that they are called evil, and of evil we say that no such thing exists.¹ If therefore thou meet a man grown so vile as to have turned from good to evil, thou canst not rightly call him a man, but a beast. If thou observe that a man is greedy and a robber, thou shalt not call him man, but wolf; and the fierce and froward thou shalt call hound, not man.² The false and crafty thou shalt call fox, not man; him that is beyond measure savage and wrathful and over-passionate, thou shalt name lion, not man. The lazy one that is too slow thou shalt call ass rather than man; and the over-timid one, that is afraid more than he need be, thou mayest call hare rather than man. To the unsteady and frivolous thou mayest say that he is more like to the wind or the restless fowls of the air than to a steady-going man; and to him whom thou perceivest wallowing in his carnal lusts thou mayest say that he is most like to swine.'

That ends the list of similes, from which Alfred omits the quarrelsome litigious man, who is like a dog. The word *swine*, as we have said, sets Alfred off upon an expansion,

¹ This point recurs in Alfred's books. God does not permit the existence of evil, for evil has no existence; it is only the absence of good.

² See the "mad hound" of Alfred's Metre. This may serve to illustrate another point, that Alfred finds in the Proses of Boethius matter for the expansion of the Metres of Boethius.

'fat swine that love always to lie in foul pools, and never care to wash themselves in clean water. When they are now and again made to wash, they rush back afterwards to their filth and wallow in it.'

That expansion appears to have caused Alfred to omit the pointed summing up of Boethius's interlocutor: "So it comes to pass, that he who by forsaking righteousness ceases to be a man, since he cannot pass into a godlike condition, actually turns into a brute beast."

We can now pass on to the sixth Prose of this Fourth Book, where we find specially interesting discussions in which Alfred plays an active part.

iv. p. 6. Here Philosophy is asked to state her own conclusions on the matter of good and ill fortune. She replies to the Mind that this is the most difficult task she can have set before her; as soon as one difficulty is solved another appears, like the heads of Hydra. Here, of course, Alfred in his version interposes the story of 'Erculus' and the Hydra. Philosophy names the principal heads which must be treated at length, and tells the Mind that there will be no more of her sweet musical song till all have been reviewed. They are six: the Simplicity of Providence, the Order of Fate, Unforeseen Chance, Divine Knowledge, Predestination, and Free Will. The Divine Mind has willed that the method of its rule shall be manifold in its ways. These ways in the purity of God's understanding are called Providence; when they are set in motion in their due order they are called by the ancients Fate. Thus all that is under Fate is also under Providence; but some things under Providence are above the course of Fate, such, namely, as are nigh unto the primal Divinity, stable and fixed, outside the order of Fate's movements. As time is to eternity, so is the shifting series of Fate to the steadfastness and simplicity of Providence. The Divine Mind puts forth an inflexible order of causes, and this order, by its essential immutability, restricts things mutable which otherwise would have a confused course.

But, Philosophy continues in her address to the Mind, you may say, "What confusion can be more unjust than that prosperity and adversity should happen to the good, as also to the bad?" But, are men so sound of mind that their judgments of right and wrong correspond to the real facts? Is it not the case that those whom some deem worthy of

reward others deem worthy of punishment? And even if a man were able to judge between goodness and badness, can he look into the constitution of the soul? Take an illustration from the health of the body. Sweet things suit some constitutions, bitter things others. Some sick men need mild remedies, others severe. The physician distinguishes. God, the physician of the mind, perceives what is suited to each and assigns it, preserving goodness, expelling badness. Doubt not that things are rightly ordered. Lucan said the winning cause found favour with the gods, the losing with Cato. If things seem to thee confused, the confusion is in thy judgment. The good are often afflicted; they are brought by it to the test of their true self. The evil often meet with good fortune; it is a lesson to the good not to set so much store on such good fortune, and it may reform the evil-doer, from fear lest he lose his good fortune. On the other hand, if the bad have ill fortune, and are oppressed by the bad, the injustice which they receive from the bad may make them detest badness. It is the Divine alone by which things evil can be made to work good.

Let us be content to have apprehended this, that God disposeth all things and guides them to good. Thou art fatigued by the long argument, and wouldst have the refreshment of sweet poesie. Listen while I sing:

iv. m. 6. Si vis celsi jura tonantis
Pura sollers cernere mente—

Would thou with unclouded mind
View the laws by God designed
Lift thy steadfast gaze on high
To the starry canopy.

Towards the Good do all things tend,
Many paths, but one the end.¹

iv. p. 6. King Alfred gives a very careful and simple rendering of the argument of this Prose on the action of the Divine Mind in the matter of good and ill fortune. He puts very clearly the distinction between Providence and Fate, and adds: 'Some sages say that Fate rules both weal and woe of every man. But I say, as do all Christian men, that it is the divine purpose that rules them, not Fate; and I

¹ H. R. James, pp. 164-166.

know that it judges all things very rightly, though unthinking men may not think so. They hold that all are good who work their will, and no wonder, for they are blinded by the darkness of their sins.'

In connexion with a remark of Boethius that some very good men are spared affliction, the king adds: 'The wise man of old said that the divine power sheltered its loved ones under the spread of its wings, and shielded them as carefully as a man shields the apple of his eye. Many strive to please God, desiring of their own will to suffer many hardships, for they seek to have greater honour and repute and credit with God than those whose lives are softer.'

The king again puts very clearly the point that the good fortune of the bad is a lesson to the good: 'This is a very clear token to the wise man that he is not to love worldly happiness beyond measure, for often it comes to the worst of men.' Then he adds a remark which we might have expected from Boethius and do not find there: 'But what are we to say of the present well-being that often comes to the good man? What else is it but a token of the weal to come, and a beginning of the reward that God hath in store for him in return for his good will?'

The late Professor Earle, in his monograph on the Alfred Jewel (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1901), confessed that from such of Alfred's works as he had specially studied he had not seen reason to credit the king with an aptitude and a fondness for allegory. But a study of the Jewel and its imagery had guided him to find in the king's writings examples of a marked fondness for imagery and parable, and a habit of mind inclined to all figures of analogy and similitude. It is impossible to spend many months on Alfred's literary works without coming very clearly to Professor Earle's mature conclusion, or without some surprise that his conclusion came so late.

The Professor gives as a palmary example an extract from this long Prose 6 of the Fourth Book of *Boethius*. Philosophy, or Reason, is pointing out that Divine Providence is a fixed centre, round which all things move in concentric circumferences. The nearer to the fixed centre, the more restricted the less inclusive the circumference; the farther off, the larger the sweep of the circumference, the greater its inclusion, and the farther the departure from the indivisible unity of the centre. Philosophy mentions in this connexion the relation of the axle to the felly, or rim, of the wheel of a

waggon. This was certain to set Alfred off on a long expansion of the idea. We may quote Professor Earle's translation of the expansion.

iv. p. 6. 'As on a waggon's axle the wheels revolve and the axle standeth still and beareth the whole waggon and governs the whole motion ; while the wheel turns about, and the nave next to the axle moves more steadily and more securely than the fellies do : in such a manner that the axle is the highest good, which we call God, and the happiest men move nighest to God, even as the nave moveth nighest to the axle, and the middling sort are just like the spokes, forasmuch as every spoke hath one end fast in the nave and the other end in the felly. So it is with men of the middling sort ; at one time he thinks in his mind about this earthly life, at another time about the heavenly ; like a man looking with one eye to heaven and with the other to earth. Just as the spokes have one end sticking in the felly and the other in the nave, while the middle of the spoke is equally near to both, even so are the middling men in the middle of the spoke, and the better men nearer to the nave, and the meaner men nearer to the fellies : they are, however, in connexion with the nave, and the nave with the axle. So now the fellies, though they are attached to the spokes, yet are they altogether rolling upon the earth ; so are the meanest connected with the middling, and the middling with the best, and the best with God. Though the meanest men all direct their love to this world, yet can they not rest thereon, nor be of any account unless they be in some measure associated with God, any more than the wheel's fellies can be in progress unless they be attached to the spokes and the spokes to the axle. The fellies are the farthest from the axle, therefore they move the most unevenly. The nave moves next to the axle ; and that is why it has the surest motion. So do the happiest men : as they set their love nearer to God, and more resolutely contemn these earthly things, so are they more free from care, and less they reck how Fate may chance to turn, or what it may bring. In like manner the nave is continually so sure, jolt the fellies on whatso they may jolt ; and this even though the nave is somewhat apart from the axle. By this figure thou mayest understand that as the waggon is much more durably sound the less it is parted from the axle, so are those men the freest of all from care, whether about

anxieties of this life or of the next, who are fast in God : but in whatever degree they are asunder from God, in the same degree are they worried and harassed, both in mind and in body.'

After singing the Sixth Metre of the Fourth Book, Philosophy entered on a new point, laying down the principle that all fortune is good fortune, as a corollary to the discussion in iv. p. 6. King Alfred evidently enjoyed the discussion of this point. He takes the several points so clearly that we get the right impression of the argument, and we need not give any other rendering than his. He was in his element in a rapid dialogue.

Ph. Dost thou perceive whither this discourse is tending ?

M. Tell me, whither.

Ph. I will say this to thee, that every fate is good, whether men think it good or bad.

M. Methinks it may easily be so, though we may at times deem otherwise.

Ph. There is no doubt that every fate is good that is just and profitable ; for every lot, be it pleasant or unpleasant, cometh to the good man either to constrain him to do better than he did before, or to reward him for having done well before. Again, every lot that befalls the wicked man comes to him also for these two reasons, whether his be a harsh or a pleasant one. If a hard lot befalls the wicked, then it comes as a reward of his wickedness, or as a rebuke and warning to him not to do it again.

M. At this I fell on wondering, and said : This is a most truly just reasoning of thine.

Ph. It is as thou sayest ; but I desire, if it please thee, that we should turn for a while to the opinion of the common folk, lest they say we speak above men's measure.

M. Say as thou wilt.

Ph. Dost thou think that what is useful is good ?

M. I think it is.

Ph. An adverse lot is good for those that are fighting against sins, and striving to be good ?

M. I cannot gainsay this.

Ph. What thinkest thou of the good fortune that often befalls good men in this world, like a foretoken of everlasting good. Can men say it is an evil fate ?

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M. At this I smiled and said, No man says so, but says it is very good, as indeed it is.

Ph. What thinkest thou concerning the unlooked-for fate that often threatens to chastise the wicked? Do people think it is good fortune?

M. No, they do not deem it good, but miserable.

Ph. Let us refrain from thinking as the common folk think; for if we think as they do we shall forsake all reason and all righteousness.

M. Why do we forsake it any the more?

Ph. Because ordinary men say that every harsh and unlovely lot is evil; but we must not believe this, for every lot is good, as we said before, be it harsh or be it pleasing.

M. At this I was afraid, and said: What thou sayest is true; yet I know not who would dare to say so to foolish men, for no fool could believe it.

Hereupon Philosophy made earnest protest, and said: No wise man therefore should take thought, nor trouble himself overmuch, as to how his lot will turn out, or whether a hard or a gentle fate is to befall him, any more than a stout man at arms should trouble himself how often he is to fight. His praise is none the less, nay, is doubtless the greater; so is also the wise man's need the greater, the fiercer and crueller the fate that befalls him. No wise man therefore should desire a life of ease, if he cares ought for virtue or any honour in this world here, 'or for life everlasting after this world.' But every wise man must ever resist both harsh and mild fortune, lest for the one he wax over-confident, and for the other come to despair. He must rather follow the middle way¹ between a hard fate and a mild one, so that he crave not a gladder lot and greater ease than is meet; nor again a harsh one; for of neither is he able to endure an excessive measure. But which of the two they shall choose lies in their own power. 'If therefore they desire to take the middle path, they must allot themselves a pleasant and care-free fortune, and then God will deal out to them a lot of hardship both in this world and in the world to come, according to what they are able to bear.'

'Ah! ye wise men, walk all of you in the way pointed out by the famous examples of the noble ones and the ambitious men that lived before you. Why will ye not inquire after the wise men and those that coveted honours, what

¹ *Firmis medium viribus occupate*, hold the mean with all your strength.

manner of men they were that came before you ? And why will ye not, when ye have found out their manner of life, copy them with might and main ? For they strove after honour in this world, and set themselves to win good report with good works, and wrought a goodly ensample for those that came after. Therefore by virtue of their good deeds they are dwelling above the stars in bliss everlasting.' ¹

This long addition was no doubt suggested to King Alfred by the concluding stanza of the next Metre, which he omits. Philosophy has sung of the labours of the heroes of mythology, and concludes her song with the words

iv. m. 7. Ite nunc fortes ubi celsa magni
 Ducit exempli via ! Cur inertes
 Terga nudatis ? Superata tellus
 Sidera donat.

Brave hearts, press on ! Lo, heavenward lead
These bright examples ! From the fight
Turn not you backs in coward flight ;
Earth's conflict won, the stars your meed ! ²

¹ Sedgfield, pp. 160-163.

² H. R. James, p. 170.

CHAPTER XII

PROSE V. 1 TO THE END

Prose v. 1, chance and providence—Alfred's explanatory example—Boethius confesses that fortune hath rule and in order flows—Prose v. 2, have we then any free will?—Alfred's editing—His full rendering of this Prose—His simple style—Metre v. 2, Homer—In the Latin, in English verse, in Alfred's prose—Prose v. 3, why are bad men free to do evil?—Alfred's rendering of the answer—Why punish the bad, if it is foreknown that they will do evil?—Metre v. 3, contradiction between two truths—Prose v. 4, can a man change what he is destined to do?—We are not forced to do good, nor prevented doing evil—Prose v. 5, Alfred's version—Living creatures of many organizations, from shellfish to angels—Their Sense, Imagination, Thought—Metre v. 5, the upward look—In the Latin and all the versions—Prose v. 6, Boethius's summary in full—Alfred's last four words.

In some respects the last book of the five is the most interesting, as indeed we might have expected would be the case. It begins with a question, put by the Mind. (v. p. 1.) 'I would first know from thee whether there is anything in what we often hear men say about certain things, that they happen by chance?' That is how Alfred familiarizes Boethius's introduction, "I desire to know whether thou thinkest chance to be anything at all, and what it is?" Alfred continues to put into familiar form the philosophizings of Reason or Wisdom. *Nihil ex nihilo*, Boethius says. 'There is nothing,' Alfred says, 'in that which men say, to wit, that a thing happens by chance. For each thing comes from something, and so does not happen by chance; whereas if it came from nothing it would happen by chance.' Boethius quoted Aristotle in declaring that if something was done for a certain purpose, and something quite different from the purposed end emerged, that was called chance; as if one digging his ground with intention to till it, finds a hidden treasure. Alfred takes this up. 'Men used formerly to say,' he proceeds, 'when anything unlooked for took place, that it happened by chance; just as if a man were to dig in the earth and find a gold-hoard there, and then said it happened by chance. Why, I know that if the

delver had not dug the earth, and no man had hid the gold beforehand, he would not have found it. Therefore it was not found by chance ; but the divine predestination instructed the one that it wished to hide the gold, and afterwards the other that it wished to find it.'

These last words of Alfred are certainly not what Boethius could have said in his argument in favour of the complete freedom of man's will. They represent the concluding words of this Prose in the original Latin : " The cause why causes so concur and meet so together is that order which proceeds with inevitable connexion, descends from the fountain of Providence, and disposes all things in their places and times " ; a very different saying.

Alfred then omits Metre 1 of the Fifth Book, and it does not appear in the Lays. This Metre describes the intermittent and vagrant courses of the Tigris and Euphrates, which yet in all their unitings and separatings and floodings and lapses obey all the time the settled laws under which they exist. So fortune, though it seem to run with careless reins, yet hath it certain rule, and doth in order flow.

v. p. 2. The Second Prose begins with an acknowledgment on the part of Boethius that these concluding lines of the Metre express the real truth, and force upon him the question, Have we any free will, or doth the fatal chain fasten also the motions of men's minds ? Alfred, having omitted the Metre, cleverly tacks this on to the paragraph which treats of the parable of the gold-hoard, as follows : ' Then said I, I perceive it is as thou sayest ; but I would ask thee whether we have any freedom or any power as to what we shall do or what we shall not do ; or does the divine fore-ordaining or Fate compel us to will ? '

Philosophy answers him, and he gives us the answer : ' We have great power, and there is no reasoning creature but has freedom. He that has reason can judge and discern what he is to desire and what he must shun. Every man has freedom, inasmuch as he knows what he wishes and what he does not wish ; yet not all reasoning creatures have like freedom. Angels have power to judge aright, and a good purpose ; and all that they desire they get with great ease, for they desire nothing wrong. Nothing has freedom and reason save angels and men. Men have always the more freedom the nearer to divine things they set their thoughts

and have the less freedom the closer they apply their mind's desire to worldly honours. They have no freedom when of their own will they bow themselves to vices ; for as soon as they turn their minds from God they become blinded with folly. Howbeit, there is one God Almighty in His high city, who seeth every man's thoughts, and discerneth his words and his deeds, and rewardeth each according to his deserving.'

This Prose is short in the Latin, and Alfred does not cut it shorter. It therefore affords a good opportunity for comparing Alfred's translation, which we have now given, with that of a modern writer. Mr. James shall render it for us :

"I am following heedfully, said I, and I agree that it is as thou sayest. But in this series of linked causes, is there any freedom left to our will, or does the chain of fate bind also the very motions of our souls ?

"There is freedom, said she ; nor indeed can any creature be rational, unless he be endowed with free will. For that which hath the natural use of reason has the faculty of discriminative judgment, and of itself distinguishes what is to be shunned or desired. Now every one seeks what he judges desirable, and avoids what he thinks should be shunned. Wherefore beings endowed with reason possess also the faculty of free choice and refusal. But I suppose this faculty not equal alike in all. The higher Divine essences possess a clear-sighted judgment, an uncorrupt will, and an effective power of accomplishing their wishes. Human souls must needs be comparatively free while they abide in the contemplation of the Divine mind, less free when they pass into bodily form, and still less again when they are enwrapped in earthly members. But when they are given over to vices, and fall from the possession of their proper reason, then indeed their condition is utter slavery. For when they let their gaze fall from the light of highest truth to the lower world where darkness reigns, soon ignorance blinds their vision ; they are disturbed by baneful affections, by yielding and consenting to which they help to promote the slavery in which they are involved, and are in a manner led captive by reason of their very liberty. Yet He who seeth all things from eternity beholdeth these things with the eyes of His providence, and assigneth to each what is predestined for it by its merits : all things surveying, all things overhearing."

Surely a close comparison of these two renderings makes us feel that Alfred did know how to write for the man in the street.

The words "all things surveying, all things overhearing" do not come in naturally at the end of the Prose on freedom of mind. "All things surveying" would have made a good finish; but "all things overhearing" evidently strikes a false note at the point of greatest emphasis. The original is Greek, not Latin, *πάντ' ἐφορᾶν καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούειν*. The words are quoted from Homer. It is quite clear that they belong to the next Metre, which quotes Homer by name in connexion with the far range of the Sun. The Loeb text follows Engelbrecht in printing them as in the first line of the next Metre.

v. m. 2. *Πάντ' ἐφορᾶν καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούειν*
 Puro clarum lumine Phœbum
 Melliflui canit oris Homerus.
 Qui tamen intima viscera terræ
 Non valet, aut pelagi, radorum
 Infirma perrumpere luce.
 Haud sic magni conditor orbis;
 Huic ex alto cuncta tuenti
 Nulla terræ mole resistunt;
 Non nox atris nubibus obstat.
 Uno mentis cernit in ictu
 Quæ sint, quæ fuerint, veniantque
 Uno mentis cernit in ictu;
 Quem, quia respicit omnia solus,
 Verum possis dicere Solem.

Mr. James renders this Metre with great vigour:

Homer with mellifluous tongue
 Phœbus' glorious light hath sung,
 Hymning high his praise;
 Yet his feeble rays
 Ocean's hollows may not brighten,
 Nor earth's central gloom enlighten.

But the might of Him who skilled
 This great universe to build
 Is not thus confined;
 Not earth's solid rind,

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Nor night's blackest canopy,
Baffle His all-seeing eye.

All that is, hath been, shall be,
In one glance's compass He
Limitless descries ;
And, save His, no eyes
All the world survey—no, none !
Him then truly name the Sun.

Alfred renders the Metre as follows :

Though Homer—' the good poet, who with the Greeks was the best, he was Virgil's master, Virgil was with the Latin men the best '—though Homer in his poems greatly praised the nature of the sun and his excellences and his brightness,¹ yet the sun cannot shine upon all things, nor even in those things upon which he can shine can he shine on all equally, nor shine within through them. But it is not so with the ' Almighty God, who is the ' maker of all creatures. He beholds and sees through all his creatures equally. Him we may call without falsehood, the true sun.

When Wisdom had sung this lay, he ² was silent a little while.

v. p. 3. Then said I, A certain doubt hath much troubled me.

Then said he, What is that ?

Then said I, It is this, that thou sayest that God gives to every one freedom, as well to do good as to do evil, which soever he will ; and that God knows everything before it comes to pass ; and that nothing comes to pass but God wills and permits it ; and that it all must proceed as he has ordained. Now I wonder at this, Why doth he permit that wicked men have the freedom to do either good or evil, which soever they will, since he knows before that they will do evil ?

' I can very easily answer thee this inquiry. How would it please thee, if there were some very powerful king, and he had not any free man in all his realm, but all were slaves ?

¹ The Lay has words here which we might have expected to find also in Alfred's prose :

On the sun's splendour
His noble powers
In glee and story

spent high praises,
showed to the people
again and again.

² We are now quoting Mr. Fox, who gives to Wisdom the masculine gender.

'Then said I, I should not think it at all right, or moreover suitable, if men in a state of slavery should serve him.

'Then said he, How much more unnatural would it be, if God had not in all his kingdom any free creature under his power. Therefore he created two rational creatures free, angels and men. To them he gave the great gift of freedom, that they might do good or evil, whichsoever they would. He gave a very sure gift, and a very sure law with the gift, to every man until his end. The freedom is, that man may do as he will ; the law is, that it renders to every man according to his works, both in this world and in the world to come, good or evil, as the man does. By this freedom men may attain to anything they will, except that they cannot escape death. They may by good works delay it, so that it come later ; they may sometimes defer it till old age, if they cease not to have the will to good deeds, which is good.

'Then said I, Well, thou hast set me right in the doubt and in the trouble which I had before concerning freedom. But I am still disquieted with much more trouble, almost to despair.

'Then said he, What is this great disquiet ?

'Then said I, It is because of the fore-ordaining of God. For we sometimes hear say that all must so come to pass as God at the beginning had decreed, so that no man might change it. Now methinks He doth amiss when He honours the good, and also when he punishes the wicked, if it is true that it was so ordained to them that they could not do otherwise. In vain we labour when we pray, and when we fast, or give alms, if we have not therefore more favour than those who in all things walk after their own will and run after their bodily lust.'

Alfred omits the Third Metre of this Book, and it is correspondingly omitted from the Lays. The Metre deals with the puzzle of the apparent contradiction between two truths. Alfred proceeds with the Fourth Prose, which deals with the subject of the omitted Metre.

v. p. 4. Then said he,¹ This is the old complaint, which thou hast long bewailed, and many other men before thee. One of them was Marcus 'Tullius, who was called Cicero by a third name, a chieftain² of the Romans, and a sage. He was much occupied with this question, neither he nor other

¹ Still the masculine, for Wisdom.

² Heretoga.

men could bring it to any end at that time, because their mind was occupied with the desires of this world. But I say to thee this, if that is true which ye say, it was a vain command in divine books which God commanded, that man should forsake evil and do good, and again the saying which he said that the more a man labours the more he shall receive. I wonder thou hast forgotten all that we before mentioned.

‘What, said I, have we forgotten that we said before ?

‘Then said he, We before said that the divine ordainment was that all was good and nothing evil, neither seeking to do evil nor ever doing it. Moreover, we proved that to be good which to the common folk seemed to be evil, that a man is afflicted and punished for his sin. Did we not also say in this same book that God had decreed to give freedom to man, and had done so ; and if they exercised the freedom well he would greatly honour them with life everlasting, and if they abused the freedom he would punish them with death ? He ordained that if they at all sinned through this freedom, they should through the freedom make amends by repentance, and that if any of them were so hard of heart that he would not repent, he should have just punishment. All creatures he had made without freedom except angels and men. Because the other creatures are without freedom, they perform their service till doomsday ; but men and angels, being free, do not perform that service. How can men say that the divine purpose had ordained that it does not fulfil ? Or how can they say in excuse that they cannot do good, when it is written that God will requite every man according to his works. Why then should any man be idle, that he work not ?

‘Then said I, Thou hast sufficiently relieved me from my mind’s doubt on the question I asked thee. But I would still ask thee a question about which I doubt.

‘Then said he, What is that ?

‘Then said I, I am well aware that God knows everything beforehand, both good and evil, before it happens ; but I know not whether it all shall unchangeably happen, which he knows and hath decreed.

‘Then said he, It need not all happen unchangeably, but part of it must happen, namely that which is necessary for us and is his will. But some of it is so arranged that it is not necessary, and yet hurts not if it happen, nor is there harm if it happen not. Consider now thine own case. Hast

thou ever so firmly designed anything that thou thinkest it never with thy consent may be changed nor thou exist without it ? Or again, whether art thou so uncertain in any course that it matters not whether it happen or not ? Many a thing there is of which God knows before it happen, and knows also that it will harm his creatures if it happen. He does not know it because he wills it should happen, but because he wills to provide that it may not happen. Thus a good pilot perceives a great storm of wind before it happens, and bids furl the sail, and lower the mast, and let go the cable, and by preparing for the evil wind he provides against the storm.'

Then said I, Thou hast greatly helped me in this matter. I wonder why so many wise men have so laboured at this question, and have found so little certain.

Then said he, What dost thou so greatly wonder at, easy as it is to understand ? Knowest thou not that many a thing is not understood as it really is, but according to the measure of the understanding that inquires into it ? 'Such is Wisdom that no man on earth can comprehend it as it really is ; but every man strives to understand it if he may, according to the measure of his ability. But Wisdom can comprehend us exactly as we are, though we cannot comprehend her exactly as she is. For Wisdom is God. He sees all our works, good and evil, before they come to pass, even before they are thought of. But He doth not any the more constrain us so that we must do good, or prevent us from doing wrong ; because he hath given us freedom.' I can show thee examples, whereby thou mayest more easily understand this discourse. Lo now, thou knowest that sight 'and hearing' and feeling perceive the body of a man, and yet do not perceive it alike. 'The ears perceive what they hear,' and yet do not perceive the body as it really is ; touch may 'grope and feel that it is a body, but cannot feel if it be black or white, fair or not fair.' But the sight, when first the eyes look upon it, perceives all the form of the body. But I will give still another example, that thou mayest know what thou didst wonder at.

What is that ? said I.

Then said he, It is this. The same man perceives in separate ways what he perceives in a man. He perceives separately with his eyes, with his ears, with his imagination, his reason, his intelligence.

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Alfred here omits Metre 4, as does also the collection of Lays. He proceeds with the next Prose, without a break, as though nothing had intervened. The angels and the climax up to God are not in the original.

v. p. 5. 'There are many living creatures that do not move, such as shell-fish, and yet have some measure of sense, for they could not live if they had none. Some can see, some hear, some feel, some smell. But moving creatures are more like men, because they have all that they who do not move have, and more besides. They are like men, loving what they love, hating what they hate; flying from what they hate, seeking what they love. Now men have all that we have spoken of, and, in addition, the great gift of reason. Angels have intelligence. Creatures are thus made, that they who move not may not exalt themselves beyond those that move; and they that move exalt themselves not above men; nor men above the angels; nor the angels above God. It is pitiful that the greater part of men seek not after that which has been given to them, that is, reason, nor seek that which is above them, possessed by angels and wise men, that is, insight. But most men do as beasts do, desiring bodily pleasure. If we had any portion of the unhesitating intelligence which the angels have, we might perceive that this intelligence is higher than our reason. Though we consider many things, we have little understanding free from doubt; but to the angels there is not any doubt on any of the things which they know, therefore is their understanding as much better than our reason as our reason is better than the understanding of beasts or any part of the wit entrusted to them, whether those that move or those that do not move.

'But now let us raise our minds, as high as we may, towards the summit of the highest intelligence, that thou mayest most readily and most easily come to thine own country, whence thou once didst come. There may thy mind and thy reason see plainly all that it now doubts about, both concerning the divine foreknowledge of which we have often spoken, and concerning our freedom, and concerning all things.'

Although we have noted all this as of Alfred's own composition, it should be borne in mind that Alfred takes a great deal of it from Boethius. Thus the comparisons between the

shell-fish, the cattle, and the human race, are in *Boethius*, and their qualities of Sense, Imagination, Thought. There are no angels in the climax of the Latin philosopher; the next and final step above man and his Thought is Intelligence, in Divinity alone. We have seen this substitution in the second Prose of this Fifth Book. It is far from clear that to the educated mind Alfred's treatment here is any improvement upon Boethius, indeed that proposition might be more positively stated.

Besides this, the concluding paragraph of Alfred's version, 'But now let us raise our minds,' comes very near to a free translation. The Latin literally gives the following rendering: "Wherefore let us soar, if we can, to the heights of that Supreme Intelligence. For there Reason will see what in itself it cannot look upon; and that is, in what way things whose occurrence is not certain may yet be seen in a sure and definite foreknowledge, and that this foreknowledge is not conjecture, but rather knowledge in its supreme simplicity, free of all limits and restrictions."

We must now bring to an end our extracts from the *De Consolatione*, whether the Latin or the Anglo-Saxon.

Both from the importance of their position, and from the importance of their contents, the concluding Metre and Prose of the *De Consolatione* must be given, the Metre in full, the Prose of Boethius with some approach to fullness, the Prose of Alfred, and also the Lay, completely.

v. m. 5. Quam variis terras animalia permeant figuris !
 Namque alia extento sunt corpore, pulveremque verrunt,
 Continuumque trahunt vi pectoris incitata sulcum.
 Sunt quibus alarum levitas vaga verberetque ventos
 Et liquido longi spatia ætheris enatet volatu,
 Hæc pressisse solo vestigia, gressibusque gaudent
 Vel virides campos transmittere, vel subire silvas.
 Quæ variis videns licet omnia discrepare formis,
 Prona tamen facies hebetes valet ingravare sensus.
 Unica gens hominum celsum levat altius cacumen
 Atque levis recto stat corpore despicitque terras.
 Hæc nisi terrenus male desipis, admonet figura,
 Qui recto cælum vultu petis, exserisque frontem,
 In sublime feras animam quoque, ne gravata pessus
 Inferior sidat mens corpore celsius levato.

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Mr. H. R. James renders this with wonted force and skill :

THE UPWARD LOOK

In what divers shapes and fashions do the creatures great
and small
Over wide earth's teeming surface skim, or scud, or walk, or
crawl !
Some with elongated body sweep the ground, and, as they
move,
Trail perforce with writhing belly in the dust a sinuous groove ;
Some, on light wing upward soaring, swiftly do the winds
divide,
And through heaven's ample spaces in free motion smoothly
glide :
These earth's solid surface pressing, with firm paces onward
rove,
Ranging through the verdant meadows, crouching in the
woodland grove.
Great and wondrous is their variance ! Yet, in all, the head
low-bent
Dulls the soul and blunts the senses, though their forms be
different.
Man alone, erect, aspiring, lifts his forehead to the skies,
And in upright posture steadfast seems earth's baseness to
despise.

If with earth not all besotted, to this parable give ear,
Thou whose gaze is fixed on heaven, who thy face on high
dost rear :
Lift thy soul, too, heavenward ; haply lest it strain its
heavenly worth,
And thine eyes alone look upward, while thy mind cleaves
to the earth.

Alfred's prose rendering is as follows :

‘Lo ! thou mayest perceive that there are many creatures
moving over the ground most diverse in form and movement.
Some lie with the whole body on the ground and move by
creeping, so that neither feet nor wings help them ; others
are two-footed, others four-footed, others again flying, yet
all are bent down towards the ground and seek there what-
soever they desire or need. But man alone walketh upright ;

and this is a token that he shall turn his thoughts rather upwards than downwards, lest the mind be lower than the body.'

The Lay runs thus (Dr. Sedgefield, p. 239) :

Thou mayest know,	if thou wilt notice,
That many creatures	of various kinds
Fare over earth	with unlike motions,
With gait and colour	quite diverse,
And aspects also	of endless kinds,
Queer and common.	Some creep and crawl
With all their body	bound to the ground ;
No wings them help ;	on feet they walk not,
Nor pace the earth,	as was them appointed.
Some on two feet	fare o'er the ground,
Some are four-footed ;	some in flight
Wing 'neath the clouds.	Yet each creature
Is drooping earthward,	stooping downward,
On the ground looking,	longing for earth,
Some need-driven,	some through greed.
Man only goeth	of all God's creatures
With gait upright,	gazing upwards.
This is a token	that he shall turn
His trust and his mind	more up than down,
To the heavens above,	lest he bend his thoughts
Like beasts earthward.	It is not meet
That the mind of a mortal	should remain below
While his face he holdeth	up to heaven.

The concluding argument of Boethius, as given in his final Prose, may be summarized as follows :

v. p. 6. God is eternal ; in this judgment all rational beings agree. Eternity is the possession of endless life whole and perfect at a single moment. Contrasting this with things temporal we see that there is nothing set in time which embraces the whole space of its life in one ; to-morrow's state it grasps not yet, while it has already lost yesterday's ; however long it may last, it cannot be called eternal. That which possesses the fullness of unending life at once, from which nothing past has escaped, from which nothing future is absent, is rightly called eternal. It is one thing for existence to be endlessly prolonged, which was Plato's idea of the world ; another for the whole of an endless life to be embraced in the present,

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which is manifestly a property peculiar to the divine mind. So then, if we are minded to give things their right names, God is eternal, the world everlasting.

God, then, abides for ever in an eternal present, embracing the whole infinite sweep of the past and of the future in simple cognition, as if it were now taking place. Thus we should not speak of God's foreknowledge as of something future, but of His knowledge of a moment that never passes ; so that we should describe it not as prevision, but as providence, *non prævidentia sed providentia* ; and the things which are surveyed by the Divine eye are not on that account involved in necessity.

If thou sayest that what God sees to be about to come to pass cannot fail to come to pass, and what cannot fail to come to pass must of necessity come to pass, my answer would be that the future event is necessary from the standpoint of Divine knowledge, but in its own nature it is free and unfettered. There are two necessities ; the one simple, as that men are necessarily mortal ; the other conditioned, as that if you know some one is walking, he must necessarily be walking.

God views as present those coming events which happen of free will. All things will come to pass which God foreknows as about to happen ; but of these, some proceed of free will ; those which thus happen do not lose their proper nature, in virtue of which it was really possible, before they happened, that they might not happen.

Thou wilt say, If it is in my power to change my purpose, I shall make void providence, since I shall perchance change something which comes within its foreknowledge. My answer is, that thou canst change thy purpose, but thou canst not avoid the Divine foreknowledge. Wilt thou say, Shall the Divine knowledge be changed at my discretion, so that when I will now this, now that, providence has alternate changes of knowledge ? No : for God's sight anticipates all that is coming. This all-comprehension God has from the simplicity of His own nature.

All this being so, the freedom of man's will stands unshaken. Laws are not unrighteous, for their rewards and punishments fall to wills unbound by necessity. Our prayers are not addressed to God in vain ; when rightly directed they cannot fail of effect.

Great is the necessity of righteousness laid upon you,

seeing that all you do is done before the eyes of a Judge who seeth all things.

King Alfred shall now give us his representation of this remarkable Prose, and his characteristic little addition of four words shall end our book.

After Philosophy had sung this lay,¹ she said :

v. p. 6. We ought with all our might to inquire about God, that we may know what He is. Though it be beyond our power to know what He is, yet we must try to know, according to the measure of the understanding He giveth us ; even as we said before that a man should understand everything in the measure of his understanding, seeing that we cannot perceive each thing as it really is. Every creature, however, both reasoning and unreasoning, declares that God is eternal, 'for never would so many creatures and so mighty and so fair have bowed themselves to a lesser creature and a lesser power than themselves, nor even to one equally great.

'What is eternity ? I said.

'Then said she, Thou askest me a thing that is great, and hard to understand ; if thou wilt know it thou must first have thine eyes clean and bright. I cannot hide from thee aught that I know. Dost thou know that there are three things on this earth ? The first lasts for a time only, and has both beginning and end ; yet I know nothing of that which lasts for a time, neither its beginning nor its end. The second thing is eternal, and has beginning but no end ; of this I know when it begins, and I know that it never ends ; such are angels, and men's souls. The third thing is eternal, without end and without beginning, even God. Between these three there is a great difference ; but if we are to note every point thereof we shall come late to the end of this book, or never at all. One thing thereof, however, thou hast need to know, and that is, why God is called the Highest Eternity.

'Why indeed ? I said.

'Inasmuch as we know, said she, very little of what was before us save by memory and asking, and still less of what shall be after us, that only is with certainty present to us which exists at the time. But to God all is present, both that which was before, and that which is now, yea and that which shall be after us ; all is present to Him. His wealth

¹ Metre 5.

never waxeth, nor doth it ever wane. He never calleth aught to mind, for He hath never forgotten aught. He looketh for naught, pondereth naught, for He knoweth all. He seeketh nothing, for He hath lost nothing. He pursueth no creature, for none may flee from Him ; nor doth he dread aught, for there is none more mighty, nor even like unto Him. He is ever giving, yet He never waneth in aught. He is ever Almighty, for He ever willeth good and not evil. He needeth nothing. He is ever eternal, for the time never was when He was not, nor ever shall be. He is ever free, and not compelled to do any work. By virtue of His divine power He is everywhere present. His greatness no man can measure ; yet this is to be conceived not as of the body but as touching the spirit, like wisdom, and righteousness, which He is Himself. But why do ye men show pride, why raise yourselves against so high a power ? Ye can do naught against Him,' for the eternal and almighty one is ever seated on the high seat of His authority, whence he can see all, and rewardeth every man very justly after his works. Therefore it is not in vain that we hope in God, for He changeth not as we do. Pray to Him humbly, for He is very generous, very merciful. 'Lift up your hearts to Him when ye raise your hands, and pray for what is right and needful for you, for he will not deny you.' Hate evil, and flee from it as ye best may ; love virtues and follow after them. Ye have great need that ye do what is good, for what ye do is ever done before the Eternal and Almighty God ; He seeth it all, 'and all He requiteth.'

APPENDIX

IN our Introduction to the study of King Alfred's version of Boethius, two early manuscripts of the Latin text were mentioned which have many glosses. The *De Consolatione* was so very popular during the earlier Middle Ages, that there must have been an abundance of marginal notes and comments and explanations and insertions in one manuscript and another of the text. We are specially told that the manuscript of the Latin text on which Alfred worked was glossed by Asser to help the king in his work. This treatment of the text no doubt went on long after Alfred's time, and with such later glosses we have nothing to do.

Dr. H. F. Stewart, to whom students of Boethius owe so much, published in the *Journal of Theological Studies* for October 1915, the Commentary of Remigius of Auxerre on the *De Consolatione*. He had ascertained that the continuous commentary contained in the Maihingen MS. mentioned in our Introduction is in fact the Commentary of Remigius. These lecture-notes of a ninth-century scholar are in themselves of great interest. They enable us to enter into the mind of the lecturer, and to mark the points which had special interest for him.

Now this Remigius was only a few years older than Alfred, and like Alfred he died in the earliest years of the tenth century. The commentary is simply the notes made by Remigius for his lectures at Paris. It is, of course, possible that Asser had some knowledge of these notes, and used them in preparing the Latin text for the King. And inasmuch as Alfred brought teachers from France, he may have known all about his contemporary Remigius, and even seen his notes. But a study of the commentary of Remigius appears to show not only that Alfred's insertions are nothing like Remigius's notes, but also that whatever may have been the source or sources of Alfred's glosses, their substance is on a higher

plane than Remigius's notes, and is quite different in character.

We have seen the Latin text and Queen Elizabeth's version of the closing lines of Metre 7 of Book I :

Gandia pelle	Chase joys
Pelle timorem	Repulse fear
Spemque fugato	Thrust out hope
Nee dolor adsit.	Woe not retain.
Nubila mens est	Cloudy is the mind
Vinctaque frænis	With snaffle bound
Hæc ubi regnant	Where they reign.

Alfred gives us, 'put away from thee evil joys and unprofitable, and also useless miseries and the evil dread of this world. That is to say, exalt not thyself beyond measure in thine health and happiness, nor again do thou despair of all good in any adversity ; for the mind is ever bound about with confusion in which either of these two ills holdeth sway.' That is helpful, simple, and dignified.

Remigius gives us this commentary : " He touches here four best-known passions, of which two are in connexion with things thought good, joy and hope, one in the present, the other in the future, joy in the present, hope in the future. Two are in connexion with things thought evil, one of the present and one of the future ; grief in the present, and fear in the future : Virgil notes these,¹ Hence they desire, fear, rejoice, and grieve, for hope and desire are the same. He [Boethius] means, therefore, that those who are subject to these passions can certainly not have their mind free, and full of reason." Is it too much to say that Alfred and Remigius are types respectively of the helpful and the dry lecturers of our youthful days ?

Some further examples may be useful, to show how clear a distinction there is between the explanations and insertions of Alfred on the one hand and the rather dull glosses of Remigius on the other.

ii. m. 8. *Cælo imperitans amor*, Love ruling Heaven. Remigius notes : " He calls God love because elements and times, however discordant they may seem among themselves, agree in this, that they tend to him as a sure end ; not to his nature but to all that is called God."

¹ *Æn.* vi. 733.

Bellum continuo geret. "If God did not by His power rule the world, keeping it in order, every thing would be instantly confused. Thus in the Gospel (John v. 17) He saith: My Father worketh up to now and I work: not that He may make new things but that He may preserve the things made."

Alfred writes thus (Sedgefield p. 50):

'Almighty God hath so constrained all His creatures with His power, that each of them is in conflict with the other and yet upholdeth the other, so that they may not break away but are brought round to the old course, and start afresh. Such is their variation, that opposites, while conflicting among themselves, yet preserve unbroken harmony together. Thus do fire and water behave, the sea and the earth, and many other creatures that are as much at variance as they are; but yet in their variance they can not only be in fellowship, but still more, one cannot exist without the other, and ever one contrary maketh the due measure of the other. So also cunningly and befittingly hath Almighty God established the law of change for all his creatures; in spring things grow, in autumn they wither away. Again, take summer and winter; in summer it is warm, in winter cold. So also the sun bringeth bright days, and at night the moon shineth, by the might of the same God. . . . These ordinances God suffereth to stand as long as He willeth, but whenever he shall loose the bridle-rein and let them fall asunder they shall sever their present harmony, and, striving together each according to his own will, abandon their fellowship, and destroy all this world, and themselves be brought to naught.'

It is not unfair to say that not in details only but in method and in purpose there is no relationship or connexion here between Remigius and Alfred.

iii. m. 2. *Quantas rerum flectat habenas Natura potens.* How the might of Nature sways all the world in ordered ways. "This very poetic metre dwells on the point that all things retain their nature, tame them, cage them, bend them, as you will; and if you relax your constraining force, their nature breaks loose and goes its own way.

It is very difficult to see the connexion of Remigius's note with Boethius's Latin. "This theme [he says] is taken by Boethius from the principle that in the minds of men there is inserted by nature a desire of good. He shows that every thing retains its nature, deflect it as you will," the only remark

which seems to be to the point or in accordance with the text. "He shows also that all things are essentially good, because a good God made all. Not that all things are just which are good. For things are good in essence and nature, but just in act and operation. Hence also the devil is said to be good essentially, but not just in operation."¹

There is no sign of any difference of reading in the Latin text of Boethius; and no other explanation of the divergence from the words of Boethius as we have them suggests itself.

It is needless to say that there is nothing in Alfred to correspond with this gloss of Remigius. He gives the examples which he finds in Boethius, the lion, the bird, the twig, the sun itself, and continues freely thus: 'Not one creature is there that doth not wish to reach the place from which it started, where it findeth rest, and naught to trouble. Now that rest is in God, nay, it is God. But each creature turneth round on itself, as a wheel doth, and turneth in such a way as to come back to its starting-point, and to be once more that which before it was as soon as it hath returned to where it was, and to do again what it did before.'

In like manner the Lay ends:

Then duly again	it shall do what it did,
And be yet again	what it was of yore.

iii. m. 9. This striking Metre is noted as an able summary of the first part of Plato's *Timæus*. We naturally turn to Remigius, and ask him what kind of comment the contemporaries of King Alfred, the teachers of the schools of France, were accustomed to make on this summary.

Lines 1 and 2 run thus in the Latin: *O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas, Terrarum caelique sator*, O Thou Who dost govern the world by perpetual reason, maker of earth and heaven. Remigius notes that, "Ratio, Reason, means the wisdom of God or the eternal management or arrangement by God which keeps things as they are, and created them. Further, that the Earth and the Heaven either mean simply the four elements of which all things consist, or mean the one the angels, the other the men." Alfred says: 'Thou that didst wonderfully fashion all thy creatures, visible and invisible, and rulest them wisely.'

¹ Aug. *De vera relig.* 26; *De Civ. Dei*, xix. 13.

Ab aevo das cuncta moveri, From the beginning thou givest all to be moved. Remigius notes : " All things which thou givest thou makest to be moved in place or time. For things corporal are all moved in place and time ; but spiritual things, such as the soul, are moved in time only, not in place. But God is moved neither in place nor in time, but fills every place with His majesty, and in Him are all times at once." Alfred says : ' Thou hast appointed the seasons in due order from the beginning of the world to the end thereof. Thou that willedest according to thy will all things that move.'

Quae cum secta duos motum glomeravit in orbes, This, cleft in twain, and in two circles gathered. Remigius comments : " The soul is not divided in its nature, but its action is divided into two eyes for contemplating any thing, and thus it is said to gather its motion into two orbs, and it returns to itself. The doctors say that by the sight of the eyes the force of the soul goes out to behold external things. It so extends itself that it immediately returns to itself and by profound meditation revolves and treats in like fashion that which it sees outside. For as it sees externally it wills. So it is to be understood of other things which it first sees and then meditates. For while the sun is one, it is seen to divide its rays diversely and enters by cracks and windows into two orbs, that is, rising and setting."

This is Plato and Remigius ; emphatically not Alfred.

Mediam animam, the middle soul. These words are found in the thirteenth and fourteenth lines of the Metre, which Stewart and Rand render adequately thus :

Thou in consenting parts fitly disposed hast
Th' all moving soul in midst of three-fold nature placed.

As we have seen in Chapter ix., Remigius glosses thus :

" The soul is called middle, not because it comes forth from the navel, but because its seat is properly in the heart, where is the pontificate of life. Or it is surely called ' middle ' because the soul is midway between the soul of beasts and the spirit of angels. For every spirit either is covered with flesh and with the flesh dies ; or with the flesh does not die ; or neither is covered with flesh nor dies. The soul of beasts is covered with flesh and dies with the flesh ; the soul of men is covered with flesh, but does not die with the flesh ; the spirit of angels is not covered with flesh and does not die. To more prudent interpreters it appears that by the

middle soul is meant the reasonable soul, which has great concord with the world; whence the Greeks call man a microcosm, that is, a lesser world. For as the world consists of four elements and four seasons, so man consists of four humours and four impulses.

"Let us see the concord of the world and man. There are four elements, air, fire, water, earth. Air is warm and moist; spring is warm and moist. The blood in the boy is warm and moist, for boyhood is warm and moist. Fire is warm and dry; summer is warm and dry. The ruddy bile¹ which abounds in adolescence is warm and dry, for adolescence is warm and dry. Earth is cold and dry; autumn is cold and dry. Melancholy, that is the black bile which is in middle-aged² men, is cold and dry, for middle age is cold and dry. Water is cold and moist; winter is cold and moist; the phlegm which abounds in old men is cold and moist; old age is cold and moist.

"That world³ has a soul of triple nature, for it has the qualities of anger, desire, reason. Anger, that it may be wrathful with vice and bodily pleasure; desire, that it may love God and seek after virtue; reason, that it may discern between creator and creature, good and evil. If these three are reasonably preserved they unite the creature to the Creator. But if they suffer change, they enfeeble the mind. For if that quality be corrupted which is called anger, the man becomes gloomy, rancid, full of the gall of bitterness. If that quality which is called desire be vitiated, the man becomes drunken, lustful, a slave of pleasures. But if that quality be corrupted which is called reason, the man becomes haughty, heretic, subject to all vices."

We have seen, pages 340-344, how Alfred renders the passage. Anything less like Remigius one could scarcely conceive.

iv. p. 6. *De providentie simplicitate, de fati serie*, Of the simplicity of Providence, of the course of Fate. Remigius comments: "There is a difference between Providence and Fate. Providence is the hidden disposition in the recesses

¹ My friend Sir Norman Moore tells me that certain Commentaries on the Aphorisms of Boerhaave suggest that what we should call hæmorrhages from the mucous membrane of the bowel were regarded as red bile, and Bruno's Lexicon (in 1682) under *bilis pallida*, has *huc contraria est rubra*.

² The Latin is *juventus*, which the dictionaries give as from twenty to forty. It is followed here by *senectus*. Hippocrates, Sir Norman Moore tells me, says that black bile dominates between twenty-five and forty-five years of age.

³ Man had just before been described as "a microcosm, that is, a lesser world." The text here no doubt refers back to that.

of the Divine Mind, embracing and disposing all things ; as a workman fashions his work in his mind before he begins to execute it. Fate is when the work begins to come out and show itself outwardly. The blessed Gregory says that Fate is nothing (Hom. x. in *Evang.* 4). But if Fate is to be spoken of as something, it is the natural order of things coming from the Providence of God." This is quite clearly stated by Boethius himself in his next paragraph, so that any phrase of Alfred's which may seem to come from some philosophic gloss comes naturally from the Latin text.

v. p. 2. *Neque enim fuerit ulla rationalis natura, quia [quin] eidem libertas adsit arbitrii*, There can be no reasonable nature unless endowed with free will. Remigius notes : " Hence we learn that only angels and men were created by God with the endowment of reason and the grant of free will to good or evil, and the evil angels lost freedom of will when they went astray, so that they neither wish nor are able to do good. Their will only remained to them in the evil they chose. But the holy angels, terrified by the ruin of the malignant spirits, were so strengthened and bettered in goodness of will that they neither wish nor are able to do evil ; and the good they will to do they are entirely able to do at once. Similarly, man also, before he sinned, had freedom of will, whether he would remain in the nature of good or would rush to evil. But after he had, under no compulsion, sinned, he lost the will to do good, and had freedom of will only to do the evil to which of his own accord he had lapsed. Not only, then, can man of himself not do good, he cannot even think it without the clemency of God. Man has, therefore, free will, not sane but corrupt, and always running towards evil."

Here again we have nothing like this from Alfred, whose full rendering of this Prose we give at page 369. It is true that in more than one case Alfred adds 'angels' where Boethius speaks only of men as reasoning creatures, and Mr. Sedgfield marks the 'angels' in Alfred's version of this Prose as an addition by Alfred. But in this case Alfred found not men only, but "divine substances" named in Boethius as endowed with wisdom, and this he takes to mean the angels. The whole of Remigius's remarks on this Prose are very far removed from anything we find in Alfred ; and we must conclude that whatever glosses Alfred may have used in 890, they were not the parents of Remigius's notes, nor the authors of Remigius's school of thought.

If we find passages in which Alfred is in correspondence more or less close with Remigius, we may note that Remigius in these passages is not adding to what Plato writes in the *Timaeus*, but is adding to Boethius's short phrases other extracts from the *Timaeus*. We may fairly understand that any of the scholars of that day who were dealing with and expanding Boethius, as Alfred was, would naturally embody in their work what they read in the Latin translation of the *Timaeus*, which was current in their day. Thus when Asser was set to gloss Boethius in preparation for Alfred's version, it is practically certain that in many cases he would make the same pointed extracts from the *Timaeus* which Remigius and other teachers were making at the same time. It may be seriously argued that a large number of Alfred's abundant glosses were provided independently by Alfred and his own learned men, not copied out from manuscripts in circulation in France and elsewhere.

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